LETTERS

FROM

JULIET Lady CATESBY,

To her FRIEND

Lady HENRIETTA CAMPLEY.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH.

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LETTERS

FROM

Lady JULIET CATESBY,

TO

Lady HENRIETTA CAMPLEY,

HER FRIEND.

LETTER I.

SUMMER-HILL, *Tueſday.*

WITH ſix Horſes on full Speed, Relays properly diſpoſed, and an Air of the moſt eager Haſte, I fly, accompanied by Perſons for whom I have very little Regard, to others, for whom I have no Regard at all: I abandon my deareſt Friends; I leave you, you whom I love ſo tenderly: Ah!

why this Departure! this Haſte! why preſs to arrive, where I do not wiſh to be! To remove myſelf—From whom?—From Lord *Oſſory*. Ah! my dear *Henrietta*, who would once have told me, I ſhould ever have fled from him? Is he not the ſame Object, whoſe Loſs, I imagined, would have deprived me of Life; who, during two Years, was always preſent to my Idea, and, whom nothing has Power to make me forget? I fly, then, that I may not meet thoſe Eyes, that mine have ſought with ſo much Pleaſure; where my Deſtiny ſeems wrote, and whoſe Glance once ruled all the Movements of my Soul. Strange Alteration! what different Effects are produced by the ſame Cauſe! Heavens! what was my Surprize at ſeeing him! How did his Mourning and his Air of Sorrow ſtrike me! How ought his Wife to regret the Loſs of Life! What Difficulty had I not to turn my

my Head at parting! Into what a State did that Sight!—But, could you conceive that he has dared to call at my Door,—to inſiſt on ſeeing me,—to write to me,—to imagine I would open his Letters? How audacious is this Man! But, are they not all ſo?

I AM ſtill aſtoniſhed at the Step I have taken. I tell myſelf every Moment I have acted rightly; I tell myſelf ſo, but I do not feel it ſufficiently: I ſeek for Reaſons to applaud myſelf on the Part I have purſued; I find them, but it is in my Pride only. I experience, my Dear, that the Heart has no Taſte for thoſe weak Lenitives, in which our Vanity finds ſo much Conſolation.

IN fine, I am gone. Behold me, fifty Miles from *London*, and yet not *dead;* aſſure my Lord *Caſtle-Cary* of this. In Spite of his Predictions I did not *faint away* at the

Foot of the firſt *Beech;* the *afflicted Graces* have not yet raiſed for me that *beautiful Tomb* in which he already ſaw me laid. Tell him that I do not repent: I can do Violence to my Sentiments; I can ſuffer; but I know not how to repent. Adieu! my amiable *Henrietta!* When you have told his Lordſhip all this, tell yourſelf, that no-body loves you ſo much as I do.

LETTER II.

Wedneſday, Sir JOHN ASTON's.

WE are going to leave a very diſagreeable Houſe, the Maſter of which is ſtill more diſagreeable. He is one of thoſe troubleſome People, one is ſo ſorry to meet with; the Species of whom is, however, too common; one of thoſe Men who

who fatigue one by their Attention to pleaſe, and never ſpeak, but in a Strain of tedious Compliment. He has given us a very plentiful, and a very bad Supper; ſerved up with ſo much Ceremony, and ſuch an Air of Preparation, as could not fail of making the whole Company ſenſible how much Trouble they had occaſioned.

Sir *John* has been married ſix Months, as you know; his Lady is a young Woman, long, lean, pale, fooliſh, proud, with a termagant Air; a little Head, ſet upon a thin Neck, and an eternal Sneer, without the leaſt Trace of Gaiety on her Counteuance. This Couple ſeemed to me, extremely well paired.

Sir *Harry* is very much attached to Lady *Elizabeth*; except my own, I have ſeen few Brothers ſo obliging. But, as our Virtues borrow ſomething from our Temperament,

I have diſcovered that he is naturally attentive and officious: he loves to mix in every thing, to make himſelf neceſſary. We have already had two or three Quarrels: He will ſtifle me in the Coach, for fear I ſhould get Cold; I let down the Glaſs, he pulls it up, and I again let it down; he makes grave Repreſentations to me on the Subject; I, with all Gentleneſs, explain to him my Will; he inſiſts; I am obſtinate; he gives it up with Reluctance; and, when I have put him into a very bad Humour, he chides, and I recover the Liberty of Breathing.

For Sir *James*, his Character is Sweetneſs, Complaiſance, and Grace, united to Gaiety; he ſpeaks juſt what he ought; he expreſſes himſelf agreeably, and what he ſays amuſes: Lady *Elizabeth* is enchanted with him: You know how lively her Approbations are; it is

happy

happy for her, they are not laſting enough to convert themſelves into tenderer Sentiments.

I ENDEAVOUR to buſy myſelf about others, that I may drive away thoſe Woes, which brink me back to myſelf. Sometimes I flatter myſelf that I no longer love; that what I felt at ſeeing my Lord *Oſſory* was more owing to Hatred, than to a ſofter Paſſion.—I hate him, perhaps!—Ah! why ſhould I not hate him?—I hope at leaſt that I ſhall become calm enough to ſee him, to ſpeak to him, to treat him with the moſt mortifying Diſdain.—O, no—I will never ſpeak to him, will never ſee him.—Here is Sir *Harry*, he teaſes me, he will not wait; this is one of his Faults; not the leaſt Patience. Adieu! love me, love me as you know you are beloved by me.

LETTER III.

Thurſday, Lord DANBY's.

I WRITE to you, from the moſt agreeable Place, perhaps, in Nature: From my Window I have a View of Woods, Waters, Meadows, the moſt beautiful Landſcape imaginable: Every thing expreſſes Calmneſs and Tranquillity: This ſmiling Abode is an Image of the ſoft Peace, which reigns in the Soul of the Sage who inhabits it. This amiable Dwelling carries one inſenſibly to reflect; to retire into one's ſelf; but one cannot at all Times reliſh this Kind of Retreat; one may find in the Receſſes of the Heart, more importunate Purſuers than thoſe from whom Solitude delivers us.

LORD

Lord *Danby* received us perfectly well; could one imagine a Man like him would not think Retirement a Misfortune? It is rare, very rare, my Dear, that Perſons born in a high Rank, educated in the Hurry of the World, in the toilſome Inactivity of a Court, can find in themſelves the Reſources againſt Laſſitude. The Remembrance of the paſt, often offers nothing to their View but a Chain of Follies and Weakneſſes, which, ſeen in cold Blood, appear in their true Colour. One muſt have all my Lord *Danby's* Virtues, to find the Examination of one's own Heart a pleaſing Employment.

I have found out, that Sir *Harry* is as curious as he is attentive: He ſtopped our Women an Hour, to aſk a thouſand Queſtions of *Betty:* He has remarked the Sighs that eſcape me; he fancies there is a Secret

in one of my Boxes; he has offered her ten Guineas to assure him of it. He is *astonished that I write to you every Day; he cannot conceive the Reason of so regular a Correspondence. Is it really to you I write?* What think you of these impertinent Enquiries? they cost me twelve Guineas; for I fancy I ought to reward *Betty's* Fidelity, for Fear, upon Reflexion, she should repent of it.

The Man knows not what he would have; he wearies me, he displeases me.—I believe really, he intends.—Ah! how odious would he then be to me.—Don't I see him?—Heaven! what a Look!—He certainly divines I am speaking of him. It is my Letter which put him into this ill Humour.—I promise you, Sir *Harry*, I shall write every Day, therefore be so good to use yourself to it.—But his Sister comes,—

I must

I muſt leave you; my dear Friend. Adieu! tell my Lord *Caſtle-Cary*, I do not forget him.

LETTER IV.

From the Manſion of Sir GEORGE HOWARD, *your humble Adorer.*

FRIDAY.

I CONGRATULATE you, my *Henrietta*, on ſo obſtinately refuſing to become the Miſtreſs of this ſavage Habitation. Miſs. *Biddulph*, who, upon your Refuſal, has accepted the Heart, the Hand, and the whole immenſe Perſon of Sir *George* our Hoſt, is a much properer Perſon than yourſelf, to procure him that Species of Happineſs, which he is capable of taſting.

LADY

LADY *Howard* is a very little Woman, handſome enough, and not coquet; ſhe manages his Family, governs his Tenants, ſcolds his Servants, brings him Children, works Tapeſtry for his Rooms, does not read for fear of ſpoiling her Eyes, conſults the Chaplain, interdicts Love in all her Dominions, marries her Dependants, treats the moſt trifling Affairs ſeriouſly, and makes an important Buſineſs of the leaſt Thing in the World.

LET us, however, ſee a little nearer this happy Woman, this Woman, who will laugh till her laſt Hour: If ſhe laughs, my Dear, we ſhould weep, we, who ſo little reſemble her. We ſhould think it ſtrange, if this notable Woman had more Merit than we; it is, however, certain, ſhe has more Happineſs. Her Life is ſimple and uniform;

form; but ſhe is quiet and uſeful: To-morrow will produce no painful Change in her Situation; her Soul is always open to the Impreſſion of Pleaſure. But what Pleaſure, you will ſay? Ah! my dear *Henrietta*, are there, then, ſo many Kinds? A long Study of ourſelves, Reaſon, and Knowledge, do they render us more happy? I know not what Idea others have of this Light we call Underſtanding; it appears to my Imagination like a Torch, which the firſt Breath of Air may extinguiſh: It brightens the Darkneſs a little, but does not half diſſipate it; its weak Light is ſufficient to ſhew us, that we walk on the Edge of a Precipice, but not to point out the ſlippery Path where our Feet may fail us; we fall, my Dear, and, when at the Bottom of the Abyſs, have the Advantage of reflecting, that, if we had ſeen clearer, we had not been there.

I AM

I AM not abſolutely unhappy: I begin to believe, that the Misfortunes we bring on ourſelves, are eaſier to ſupport than thoſe we owe to others. A Kind of I know not what ſecret Emotion aſſiſts us to ſupport them; I wiſh it may not be Vanity. Adieu! my amiable Friend! How does my Lord *Caſtle-Cary* in my Abſence? I am no longer preſent to make up your Quarrels; therefore you ought to engage in them the ſeldomer. When he vexes you a little, remember he is my Relation and my Friend: He has many eſtimable Qualities, he is worthy of your Heart,—if, however, there is a Man in the World, worthy the Tenderneſs of a Woman, who thinks juſtly.

LET-

LETTER V.

Saturday, MORTIMER-HOUSE.

WE are now, my dear *Henrietta,* at a moſt delightful Seat; during two Months, Gaiety has preſided here: It belongs to a Widow, ſcarce Twenty. Enchanted with her new State, ſhe comes to paſs the Year of her Mourning here, only to meditate in Peace on her future Choice, when Decency will permit her to make herſelf Amends for what ſhe ſuffered with an old Huſband, whom ſhe hated with all her Heart. She has the moſt beautiful Face you can conceive, a fine Heighth, an Air of Dignity, and a moſt engaging Sincerity; in giving an Account of her Sufferings, ſhe ſcarce can ſmother her Laughter. *The old*

Lord

Lord was jealous, and ſhe could have over-reached him, ſhe could.—This agreeably-ſilly Creature has juſt as much Senſe, as is neceſſary to amuſe herſelf, and to pleaſe.

Miss *Annabella*, her Siſter, is a very different Creature: Was never out of this magnificent Seat, where ſhe has always lived with her Father only. Her Figure is noble and intereſting, her Air ſweet and delicate; ſhe has a great deal of Breeding, and more Sentiment. She wants nothing, in ſhort, but Knowledge of the World; but if ſhe has not all the Graces which that beſtows, ſhe is free from the Vices to which it leads; Vices, which, it is ſo difficult to avoid in polite Circles, where they have found the contemptible Art of forgiving mutually every Defect of the Heart. I am always enraged, when I hear this criminal Indulgence honoured with the Name of Softneſs

of

of Manners, Knowledge of Human Nature, and a Condeſcenſion indiſpenſable in Society. O! this Sir *Harry;* —he is inſupportable; every thing diſpleaſes him.——I thought him of a more equal Temper: People muſt be very amiable to appear ſo to thoſe who ſee them every Day; I am out of Patience with him: He adviſes me to throw away a Noſegay that Sir *James* has gathered himſelf, and has juſt given me; Sir *Harry* has not breathed ſince I have had it; he brings me twenty Examples of Illneſs, occaſioned by the too ſtrong Perfume of Jonquills; he aſſures me they are very bad for the Head. As I ſee his impertinent Jealouſy, I ſhall keep the Noſegay; I would keep it, if it gave me a thouſand Head-achs. I ſhall be at *Wincheſter* To-morrow; I ſhall find your Letters there; it is the only Pleaſure I promiſe myſelf. Adieu! My tendereſt Reſpects to my Lord *Caſtle-Cary.*

LET-

LETTER VI.

Sunday, WINCHESTER.

I RECEIVED your Letters, as ſoon as I arrived here; you cannot doubt, my dear *Henrietta*, of the ſineere Pleaſure I felt in reading them. Every Moment of my Life, your Friendſhip has been dear to me: For a long Time my Heart was ſatisfied with it: How happy was I then! If my Soul is now poſſeſſed, too feelingly poſſeſſed, by leſs voluntary, and more tumultuous Sentiments, believe me, they have not weakened that tender and ſolid Affection, which attaches me to you: The amiable Qualities, which gave Birth to this Friendſhip, owe nothing to Illuſion; nor how can either Time or Abſence deſtroy it!

Mr

My Firmneſs aſtoniſhes you. Ah! my good God! This Effort, which you admire, would, if I was able to examine it without Paſſion, loſe much of the Value we both ſet upon it. What is it that I ſacrifice? Of what Good do I deprive myſelf? Of the Sweetneſs, perhaps, of being again deceived! But can I abandon myſelf to this Pleaſure, when I have loſt that of deceiving myſelf?

You bid me pardon my Lord *Oſſory*, or think no more of him.—Pardon him? Ah! never!—Think no more of him! I think of him certainly as little as I can; I no longer think of him with Pleaſure: I no longer think of him with Regret;—I think of him.—Alas! my Dear! Becauſe it is impoſſible for me not to think of him. Remembrance will not leave us; we fancy we loſe

it in the World; but a Moment of Solitude reſtores all its Force, which Diſſipation ſeemed to have taken away. When alone, that Idea, once ſo dear to me, is ever preſent to my Imagination; I ſee again that Form.—How did the Soul, which, I believed, animated that ungrateful Man, embelliſh all his Features! What a perfect Creature did it offer to my Eyes! Ah! why, why has it torn away the amiable Veil which hid his Vices, and his Falſhood from me?—So much Candour in that Countenance; and ſo much Perfidy, ſo much Ingratitude, in that Heart! Oh! That he is not as noble, as generous, as I believed him!—Yes, my greateſt Misfortune is, being forced to deſpiſe him. Adieu! my good, my beloved Friend! I am not in a State to reply to all you aſk.—How weak am I ſtill!—Ought I to ſpeak of him?—I can fly him, renounce, hate, deteſt him: But to forget him—Alas! I cannot forget him.

LET-

LETTER VII.

Wedneſday, WINCHESTER.

I HAVE this Inſtant received a Letter from my Lord *Caſtle-Cary*, which he certainly has not communicated to you. He treats my Flight as a Piece of Female Cunning; he does not abſolutely tell me ſo, but that is what he *would* ſay. He thinks my Intention is to mortify *poor Lord Oſſory*, to try him, to make him miſerable, and at laſt to pardon him. The Idea which he has of my Deſigns, does not give me a high Opinion of the Manner in which he himſelf pardons. Let this ſuffice, till I am in a Humour to anſwer him. I ſhould indeed deſpiſe myſelf, if I was capable of ſo low an Artifice; if, believing I could forgive him—forgive him,

Henrietta!—If I could, and had the Cruelty to make him wait for my Forgiveneſs, and to play with the Suſpence of a Man that I meant to make happy, I ſhould deſpiſe myſelf indeed. No, my dear *Henrietta*, I will never oblige any one to purchaſe a Benefit I intend them. Either I know myſelf very ill, or it is not in my Nature to pardon him. I ſhould promiſe it in vain. The Sorrows I have felt are for ever engraven on my Memory: I am very far from deſiring it ſhould be in my Power, to inflict an equal Share of Miſery on him; My Hatred is as generous as my Friendſhip was tender: I ſhall confine its Effects to flying the Preſence of the Ingrate. My Lord *Caſtle-Cary* pretends, that all Reſentment ought to yield to a ſincere Repentance. With my Inferiors, I will govern myſelf by this Maxim; but never with my Friends. But, my Dear, it will not be uſeleſs to make a little Remark here.

It

It is, that Men only eſtabliſh this Principle, in Hopes to take Advantage of it: Accuſtom yourſelf to think, with my Lord *Caſtle-Cary*, that Repentance effaces all Faults, and, depend on it, he will provide himſelf of ſufficient Occaſions to repent.—His Letter diſpleaſes me, I confeſs: I renounce his Approbation: It would coſt me too dear, if I muſt buy it by a Weakneſs, which would degrade me in my own Eyes: I have always regarded as the greateſt of all Misfortunes, the Loſs of one's own good Opinion: One may enjoy the Eſteem of others, without deſerving it. We may owe it to Diſſimulation; but what muſt become of our internal Peace, when we can no longer eſteem ourſelves? My Lord *Caſtle-Cary* is very ſingular to expect I ſhould ſubmit to his Deciſion, an Affair of which he knows ſo little. Reprimand him, reprimand him heartily, I beg of you.

LETTER VIII.

Tuesday, WINCHESTER.

YOU ask me, how I spend my Time, with whom I am, and who of my present Companions are most agreeable to me. Alas! I am weary of myself; I am with all the World, and no-body pleases me enough to engage my Attention. We are here, fifteen, or sixteen of us from *London*, without counting the neighbouring People of Fashion, of whom the House is always full. This continual Crowd rather distracts than amuses me.

LORD *Wilton* has a violent Passion for the fine Arts: He has laboured hard to acquire them, but Nature has denied him the Talents

which bring them into View, and that Taſte, which only can give them Perfection. With a ſtrong Voice, he ſings diſagreeably; and dances with a bad Grace, though induſtriouſly exact in the Steps. He deſigns correctly, paints little Screens, which are neither pretty nor ugly; and makes deteſtable Verſes with great Facility. Every Day gives Birth to a thouſand Couplets, and Madrigals, in which *Cupid*, *Venus*, *Hebe*, and *Olympus*, find themſelves, whether they will or no, at the Feet of the terreſtrial Divinities of the Caſtle.—You aſſume, when you arrive, the Name which Rhyme is pleaſed to confer on you. As to the reſt, my Lord is a worthy Man; I do not believe he has a Fault, except that of deſiring to be what he is not. Born with Simplicity, Courteſy, and a moderate Underſtanding, if he had not pretended to Superiority, he had eſcaped the Mortification of ſeeing himſelf ridicu-

lous. His Lady.—But Some-body comes, —Who is it?—Ah! who can it be but Sir *Harry!*—But who has ſubjected me to Sir *Harry's* Importunities? Why muſt I ſuffer them? What Right has he to weary me thus? Ah! my dear *Henrietta*, what Enemy to the Human Race invented that Falſhood, which, under the Name of Politeneſs, commands our Civilities, and forces us to conſtrain ourſelves?—This troubleſome Creature gets Admittance into my Cloſet; inſenſibly he gains Ground; he is always at my Side.—He almoſt reads what I am writing.—I wiſh he read this, to teach him.—I continue writing on Purpoſe.—*Sir Harry, be ſo obliging,—give me Leave.*—He bows, ſighs, and ſtays; he ſtays indeed. In the Humour I am in, I wiſh he would ſpeak, that he would tell me, he loves me.—I would give a thouſand Guineas, he would make

make that Confeſſion.—Since my ill Stars will fix him here, I muſt leave you.

Tueſday Night.

As I was going to tell you this Morning, Lady *Wilton* is very amiable; ſhe thinks juſtly, behaves with Decorum, and without Affectation; ſhe is handſome, well made; by her Bloom, one would imagine her younger than Lady *Elizabeth* her Siſter. She loves her Lord, ſees his weak Side, never laughs at it herſelf; and, by her ſerious Air, prevents others from rallying him. Devout towards God, ſhe ſerves him without Oſtentation; ſevere to herſelf, complaiſant to her Friends, eaſy and gentle to all the World; ſhe claims little Attention, but attracts the higheſt, and poſſeſſes the Reſpect and ſincere Admiration of all who know her.

We have here the new Countess of *Ranelagh*, a little Giddy-brain, who loves nothing but Noise and Play; she is pretty, but without Character: How disagreeable a State! I have observed, that this Species of People adopt the Faults of every body they converse with.

But she, who pretends to the Glory of eclipsing all, of conquering all Hearts, is the beautiful Countess of *Southampton*; always lovely, lovely from Morning till Night, ever in the Attitude of sitting for her Picture, she thinks of nothing but how to appear most beautiful, and talks of nothing but the Effects of her Charms. If any Man addresses his Conversation to her, she is so convinced he is going to make her a Compliment, that an Air of Thanks precedes her Attention to what he is to say.

All

All our Ladies are buſied in rallying her; in ſpite of every thing they can ſay, the Counteſs pleaſes all Eyes, but ſhe pleaſes the Eyes only.

We have Sir *William Manly*, gay, agreeable, ſimple, plain; a true *Engliſhman*, attached to the Manners, to the Laws, to the Cuſtoms of his Country. He is of a very ancient Family, but little diſtinguiſhed by Court-favour; and thinks his Birth infinitely preferable to new, though higher, Titles. Poſſeſſor of the fineſt Eſtate in the County, he lives in the midſt of his Dependants, like a tender Father, ſurrounded by his Children, who adore him; without ever thinking he is above them, except when his Superiority can remove their Miſeries, or procure them any Advantages. In the Commiſſion of the Peace for a large County, he has laboured to inſtruct himſelf, in

what ſo many others neglect, the Duties of this Truſt, and joins Knowledge to the moſt equitable Integrity. This is a Man, my Dear; and the only one here, who deſerves that Appellation.

But the Idol of all our Ladies, is *Sydney*, the youngeſt of thoſe *Sydneys* you are acquainted with: He is a young Baronet, not very rich, but infinitely proud notwithſtanding; he is tall, well made, has the fineſt Hair in the World, admirable Teeth, ſome Wit, very little Senſe, and a great deal of trifling Jargon. He knows nothing, talks of every thing, lies with Impudence; is knowing in Dogs, Horſes, Baubles; deſpiſes every body, admires himſelf ſincerely, decides without ceaſing, tires People of Taſte, ſhines amongſt Fools, and paſſes here for a charming Fellow; Adieu! my deareſt Friend! I embrace my Lord *Caſtle-Cary*, though I do not pardon him. LET-

LETTER IX.

Wedneſday, WINCHESTER.

THEY have brought me two of your Letters; I ought to have received them Yeſterday; I was very uneaſy about them: Sir *Harry* thought they muſt have been forgot; he went ſeven Miles to enquire for them. I believe I have a bad Heart, for I am angry at having this Obligation to him.

WHAT you tell me of the Rupture between Sir *Charles* and Lady *Selby*, appears to me incredible. What? that Lover, ſo paſſionate, who adored her, who could not live without ſeeing her, and who threatened, in his zealous Furies, to ſtab himſelf before

her Eyes? He has quitted her, and with that Unconcernedneſs, that Eclat, without troubling himſelf either about her, or the World!—Happy Men! what Advantage does Difference of Education, Prejudice, and Cuſtom, give to that daring Sex, who bluſh at nothing, ſay and do whatever they pleaſe! What Arts will Man not practiſe, when impelled by Intereſt, or by Pride! He cringes at our Feet, without being aſhamed; our Scorn does not abaſe him, our Diſdain cannot repulſe him: Mean when he deſires, inſolent when he hopes, ungrateful when he has obtained. Supple and inſinuating Serpent; who, like that in *Milton*, takeſt every Form, trieſt every Art to engage our Attention; and then conveyeſt thyſelf from the Snare thou haſt ſpread for us!—Poor Lady *Selby!* How I pity her! How bitter is it to be abandoned! Ah! my dear *Henrietta!* with what Levity you ſpeak of her Situation!

Situation! If you had ever felt that tormenting Misery——May you never feel it!—This relation has recalled to my Memory those Hours, when my erring Heart —But I will think of it no more.

Have I told you, that we have here the famous Countess of *Sunderland*, so beautiful, so indifferent, so beloved, and so esteemed, not only in *England*, but in the northern Courts, of which she was the Admiration? She is near Forty, and does not appear Thirty. I cannot better paint her to you, than by sending you the Copy of a Letter she wrote to Sir *William Manly*: He has preserved it carefully ever since he received it, which is thirteen Years. He has traced the Outlines of it to me, which has given me a great Desire to see it, and he has promised me to send for the Box in which it is kept. This Letter, he says, perfectly

characteriſes the Counteſs. He was in Love with her, and cannot ſee her even now, without Emotion. He had wrote her a Declaration of Love, and it is her Anſwer to that Declaration, which I am to ſee. As ſoon as I have this wonderful Epiſtle, I will communicate it to you. Adieu! my charming Friend.

LETTER X.

Thurſday, WINCHESTER.

YOU are cruelly exact, my dear *Henrietta*: You promiſed me not to mention Lord *Oſſory*, and you keep your Word, with a Punctuality that I admire. I did not wiſh you ſhould entertain me with his Sentiments, with my own, or the Caprice which brings him back to me: But, to leave me in

in Ignorance, whether he is yet in *London*, whether he intends ſtaying there, what he is doing, whether he endeavours to ſee my Lord *Caſtle-Cary*; this is hard, yes, very hard, indeed. It is ſometimes kind to fail a little in complying with one's Requeſt.— But why this vain Curioſity?—— What Intereſt have I?—— Perſevere——Tell me nothing of him, my Temper is grown very bad, every thing diſpleaſes me: Sir *Harry* makes this Place diſagreeable to me; he beſets me, he fatigues me; wherever I turn, I ſee only him; he follows me, he meets me every where. Scarce am I a Moment in my Cloſet, before he enters with an Air of ſome important Buſineſs: You would ſuppoſe, by his Looks, ſomething very intereſting brought him there; he has nothing to ſay to me, but, perhaps, to bid me Good-morrow. He goes out, he comes back, he ſeems diſturbed; he takes out of *Betty's*

Hands

Hands whatever ſhe was going to bring me, diſorders my Books, throws them down, aſks me for Tea, goes away without drinking it; returns to tell me he is ill, overwhelmed with Anguiſh, that he is dying. He walks with his Arms acroſs, ſighs, groans, does not die, and exhauſts my Patience to that Degree, that I find it difficult to behave to him with Politeneſs. How I hate Love! How I hate all who entertain the cruel Deſign of inſpiring me with it!—Sir *James* deſires a Moment's Converſation with me: He has formed a Project, he ſays, which he will ſubmit to my Deciſion: He regards me with an Air that—He ſpeaks to me with ſuch a Tone of Voice——What can he have to ſay to me?—I have one Obligation to Lord *Oſſory*; the Remembrance of him will be my Preſervative, my eternal Preſervative, againſt all his Sex. Who can appear amiable to me, after my

Lord

Lord *Offory*? Who can inſpire me with Confidence, when my Lord *Offory* has deceived me? How different are all I ſee from him!——— But, my Dear, I muſt think no more of him.—Alas! how difficult is it to forget him!

I ENCLOSE the Letter I promiſed you: Sir *William* has allowed me to take a Copy; you will have the Goodneſs to ſend it me back?

"*To Sir* WILLIAM MANLY.

My eſteem for Sir *William Manly* engages me to explain myſelf to him, with a Freedom, which I ſhould, perhaps, diſpenſe with myſelf, from uſing to another. You are amiable, well made, modeſt; you appear prudent, and I believe you diſcreet. So many Perfections, if you join Conſtancy

to

to them, will render the Woman, who loves you, happy. They would juſtify her Choice in her own Eyes, as well as in thoſe of others: An uncommon Advantage, which would determine me in your Favour, if Love was a Sentiment to which I choſe to give up my Heart. My Reaſons for avoiding this Paſſion, are not founded on thoſe Prejudices, which have for a long Time loſt much of their Influence: The preſent Cuſtom allows me to have a Lover, and, perhaps I ſhould not eſteem myſelf leſs, if my Taſte led me to admit one. What I owe to my Lord *Sunderland*, would, however, reſtrain me, if he had the Generoſity to think our Promiſes were mutual. He neglected me at a Time, when the ſlighteſt Complaiſance would have engaged my moſt tender Attachment: I ſincerely thank him for leaving me to that Indifference, which he deſerves I ſhould feel for him: It is extreme,

treme, he knows it; and if I do not give public Marks of it, it is only from Regard to myſelf, not thinking it decent to ſhew Contempt for the Man, whoſe Name I bear.

LEFT to my own Reflexions, I have long made it my Employment to conſider, with a philoſophic Attention, the World, the different Seaſons of Human Life; the Duration, or, to ſpeak with more Propriety, the perpetual Viciſſitude, of all ſublunary Things. My moſt ſerious Study has been to examine the Virtues and the Failings of my own Sex: I have endeavoured to diſcover the Guides which are given us, to lead us ſafely through the difficult Paths in which we tread. I have ſeen, Sir *William*, that Coquetry, Weakneſs, and Pride, are the Portion of both Sexes; but particularly of my own. To Pride, well underſtood, and turned towards its nobleſt Object,

Women

Women owe their Virtue. Coquetry, in juſt Bounds, makes them agreeable; Weakneſs makes ſome wretched, and others contemptible. Our Taſte ranks us indiſpenſably in one of theſe Claſſes; mine has decided for me, Pride is my Choice. Thoſe who eſteem nothing but the frivolous Advantage of being lovely, paſs one Part of their Lives, in applauding themſelves on their Charms, and the other in lamenting their Loſs. What a ridiculous Part does a Coquet play, when ſhe has no longer thoſe Attractions ſhe would ſtill be thought to poſſeſs! Weak Women are to be pitied; the Senſibility of their Hearts is a Rock on which their Reaſon is ſhipwrecked: Too often they preſerve the Habit of loving, long after they have loſt the Power to pleaſe: They become the Jeſt of young Ingrates who addreſs, deceive, and expoſe them to public Contempt and Infamy.

PRIDE

PRIDE has none of theſe Inconveniencies; ſhe enjoys the paſt, the preſent, and the future; has always the ſame Pleaſures, Age cannot deſtroy them; ſhe loves and admires herſelf for ever. Is one not happier, Sir *William*, in indulging a Sentiment, which, one is certain, will always be pleaſing, than in giving Way to thoſe which captivate our Wills, and make our Happineſs depend on the Caprice and Inconſtancy of others? In whatever Light my Choice may appear to you, believe that nothing can make me renounce it. If my Friendſhip is dear to you, abandon for ever the uſeleſs Deſign of troubling the Sweetneſs of my Life; and, by a Conduct conformable to my Principles, render yourſelf worthy of my Confidence, and my Eſteem."

BEHOLD

BEHOLD here a Woman, who is the Object of univerſal Eſteem and Reſpect: And wherefore? Becauſe ſhe has loved herſelf, to ſuch a Degree as to leave no room for the Love of any other Being. She has excited the Admiration of all the World, but ſhe has made the Happineſs of no body, poſſibly, not even of herſelf. To oppoſe continually, that tender Inclination, which carries us—To what, my Dear! To lament one Day, the Loſs of a Bleſſing—which one Moment may change into the bittereſt Anguiſh. Is Tenderneſs then ſo eſtimable? Are its Pleaſures great enough, to recompenſe the Pangs with which its Loſs overwhelms us? I know not whether I ſee the Counteſs's Virtues, and her Reaſoning, in a juſt Light: But her Claſs of weak Women, ſeems to me, that of good Hearts.

LET-

LETTER XI.

Friday, WINCHESTER.

HOW! my dear *Henrietta!* he is gone! They know not whither! You fear he is in *France*—And why fear it?—Ah! whether he ſtays, or goes abroad, what is it to me?—What Intereſt ought I to take in it?—He is dead to me.—Yet it is ſweet, however, to think he lives for no other than myſelf.

I AM afflicted, my dear Friend; I know not what I would have: Diſguſt and Inſipidity are diffuſed around me; the Manner of living here wearies me, without diſſipating my Chagrin. Ruinous Gaming,

long

long Repaſts, a great deal of Muſic, little Repoſe, continual Noiſe, none of thoſe calm Delights I promiſed myſelf in the Country. —You are ſure, my Lord *Offory* is no longer in Town; yet, if his Family is there—one would ſuppoſe—In *France?*—Why in *France?*—The Marchioneſs of *Dorcheſter*, whom he once loved, is juſt gone thither.—Perhaps, his Paſſion for her is revived.—Does my Lord *Caſtle-Cary* hide nothing from you? The manner in which he writes to me, gives me Suſpicions.—Ah! what is all this to me? Why do I torment myſelf?—Lady *Elizabeth* begs you will ſend her a white Domino, very genteel, that is, very much adorned. Send me one alſo; let it be—my God, whatever you pleaſe: It is for a Maſquerade, that my Lord *Wilton* is to give: One is fatigued with Pleaſures here.—To go away without ſeeing Lord *Caſtle-Cary*, without endeavouring to

be

be acquainted with you, to ſpeak to you,—not to ſtrive to find out where I am, to know from myſelf!—Strange, inconceivable Creature! He appeared full of Ardour: He *could not live without ſeeing me again, without appeaſing me.—To recover his Heart, or to die*, ſaid he to *Betty*, the Day that ſhe came, all in Tears, to beg I would receive his Viſit, and hear him!—And yet he is gone! He is gone, my Dear, and has not ſeen my Lord *Caſtle-Cary*. Where-ever he is, I wiſh him all the Happineſs I deſire for myſelf. But why accuſe me of Cruelty, and reproach me for his Departure? Ah! my dear *Henrietta!* You love Lord *Caſtle-Cary* more than you imagine! You adopt his Style, without perceiving it. Adieu; Here is Sir *Harry*: I am very proper at preſent to converſe with him.

LET-

LETTER XII.

Saturday, WINCHESTER.

I AM weary to Death of this Place, my Dear. How do I already regret your Cloſet, my own, the Sweetneſs of thoſe Converſations which an undoubted Confidence rendered ſo animated, thoſe ſimple Amuſements, thoſe Hours ſo uſefully paſt in Reading! If Chagrin ſometimes broke in upon our Tranquillity, at leaſt Coldneſs never found a Place in our Hearts: One ſeems free here, and yet Conſtraint is hid under that ſeeming Liberty; Every one has the Freedom of doing what he will, but not of ſpeaking what he thinks. How little Satisfaction does the great World, that

brilliant

brilliant Society, called good Company, give to thoſe who examine it attentively! It is neither Taſte nor the Heart, nor even the Hope of Pleaſure, which draws together theſe fantaſtical Beings, born to poſſeſs much, to deſire more, and to enjoy nothing. They ſeek each other, without being impelled by Affection; they meet without being pleaſed, and part without Regret. What is it then, which unites them? Equality of Rank, and of Fortune, Cuſtom, Wearineſs of themſelves, that Neceſſity of Diſſipation, which they feel perpetually, and which ſeems attached to Greatneſs, Riches, and Splendor, in ſhort, to all thoſe Goods, which Heaven has not equally diſtributed to all its Creatures.

WHAT Bonds, my Dear, and what Friends for a Heart like mine! Little accuſtomed to diſguiſe my Sentiments, what Pleaſure

can I find amongſt thoſe to whom I cannot avow them, without Reſerve? One muſt be in a very happy Situation to amuſe oneſelf with thoſe, for whom one has no Tenderneſs; but I am too full of Reflexion: I weary you, perhaps. Adieu! in whatever Humour I am, I love you always; yes, with all my Heart.

LETTER XIII.

Sunday, WINCHESTER.

TWO of your Letters!—He is not come back—They know not where he is—One from my Lord *Caſtle-Cary*—He tells me nothing; but he chides me, and in a Style, that he would have me take for that of Friendſhip—For that of Reaſon—I will certainly anſwer him. He complains

to me of the little Complaiſance you ſhew him: Why, my dear *Henrietta*, have you not told him what you know of me, what I conſented you ſhould communicate to him? *You will not let this Man ſee to what an Exceſs another has been beloved.* The Excuſe is diſobliging; is he then to blame for being angry? Though he is my moſt eſteemed Friend, I have a Kind of Repugnance to confeſs to him my Weakneſs. I will, however, tell him all: he will at leaſt be convinced, that thoſe Caprices, with which our Sex is reproached, have no Share in my Reſentment. You are not upon good Terms with Sir *Harry*; it is a Misfortune I cannot hide from you: He aſked me Yeſterday, why you had deferred your Marriage with Lord *Caſtle-Cary*, till Summer: I told him you choſe to wait your Uncle's Return, who was to come back at that Time from his Embaſſy. A Quarter

of an Hour after he repeated the ſame Queſtion, and I made him exactly the ſame Reply. *Cruel Woman*, he exclaimed, *to impoſe ſo hard a Condition!—If I was* Caſtle-Cary—If you were, Sir? ſaid I—*I believe*—You believe?—*I hope your Ladyſhip is not offended*—But pray, if you were *Caſtle-Cary?*—*I dare not ſpeak*—*I have the Unhappineſs to diſpleaſe you*—*to be troubleſome to you, notwithſtanding, Madam*—Upon this he aroſe from his Seat, took Heaven to witneſs to I know not what, walked about very faſt, began a Converſation with himſelf, and all this with an Air ſo gloomy, ſo afflicted, ſo melancholy—And has remained ever ſince ſo diſconcerted—But here he comes, more ſad, more indiſpoſed, more dying, than ever: He brings me ſome Pamphlets; I am ſure they are worth nothing, even before I ſee them.

LETTER XIV.

Monday, WINCHESTER.

I WRITE this Poſt to Lord *Caſtle-Cary*, and give him that Detail he could not obtain from you. His long Friendſhip for my Lord *Oſſory* perſuades him, that the Uſage of which I complain, cannot be unpardonable. I flatter myſelf, he will judge otherwiſe; he ſhall no longer, at leaſt, have an Excuſe for tiring me with common-place Arguments. To tell you the Truth, my dear *Henrietta*, I would, on no Account, that any other Perſon ſhould ſee this Hiſtory; it appears to me a diſagreeable Circumſtance to have one; and, if I was to think ſeriouſly, I ſhould probably deſtroy this. I ſpent Part of the Night in writing it; I

cannot expreſs to you how much this Employment has diſordered me. As ſoon as Lord *Caſtle-Cary* has read this Pacquet, do me the Favour to burn it. I cannot anſwer your Letter; you were very gay, my Dear, when you wrote it; I am not enough ſo at preſent to reply.

To *Lord* CASTLE-CARY.

NO, my Lord, I have not that Spirit of Obſtinacy, which could lead me to afflict myſelf, that another may ſhare in my Pains; but I have that noble Firmneſs, which diſtinguiſhes generous Minds from thoſe mean Souls, always ready to receive any Impreſſion you wiſh to give them. Determined in my Reſolutions by unalterable Principles, I am capable of thoſe exalted Efforts which Honour demands; and what I believe my Duty, ſhall always regulate my Conduct, and my Ideas of Happineſs. *He has wronged*

you,

you, you ſay, *he is ſenſible of it, he returns, you reject his Submiſſions: this Proceeding is inconſiſtent with your Character: you ſtill love; you are ſtill beloved; you ought to pardon.* And why ought I, my Lord? You had a Quarrel with Mr. *Sternill*; he had inſulted you in a Moment of Madneſs, he acknowledged his Fault, he offered you all the Satisfaction in his Power; you knew he loved you: notwithſtanding this, you refuſed to hear him; nothing could prevail on you to conſent to an Accommodation: and for a doubtful Jeſt, a Word eſcaped in the Heat of a fooliſh Diſpute, you ſtretched dead at your Feet, him, whom you had an hundred Times called by the tender Name of Friend. Did any one blame your Inflexibility? And why muſt I pardon? I, who have been inſulted with cool Reflexion, with premeditated Deſign, under the Veil of Friendſhip, of Love, of all thoſe Sentiments, which

have Power to touch a grateful and tender Heart? Ah! what Right has one Sex to ſport with the Softneſs and Senſibility of the other?

If Cuſtom has made the Point of Honour different between us; if I am not forced to revenge myſelf publicly, ought my Reſentment to be the leſs lively? Ought it to yield to the Advances of an Enemy, who muſt have expiated with his Life, a much leſs Injury, had it been offered to your Lordſhip? What are your Pretenſions to inſult, or to revenge? What Pride perſuades you that you have a Right to puniſh, when you think I ought to pardon?

Don't, my Lord, give me Prejudices for Laws, nor Uſurpation as a Title; Time and Poſſeſſion may ſtrengthen the Power of Injuſtice, but cannot make it lawful. In the

the difficult Road we have travelled together, Heaven has placed us in the ſame Path; I have Spirit to keep up to you, my Lord, and can allow no Diſtinction between Creatures, who feel, think, and act, in the ſame Manner.

But I hate to declaim; and, though your Letter is very proper to animate me, I will carry the Subject no further. I will give you the Account you have deſired; I even conſent to make you the Arbiter between Lord *Oſſory* and me: Prepared, however, to appeal from your Judgment, if you condemn me after the Facts I am going to diſcloſe.

The HISTORY *of Lord* CATESBY, *and Lord* OSSORY.

WHAT I am going to confide to your Lordſhip, is intereſting only to a Friend. Wholly engroſſed by my Afflictions, I am, notwithſtanding, fully ſenſible, they contain nothing extraordinary, but the Manner in which I have felt them; but Events appear to us in a very different Light, from the Difference of our Characters: I am inconſolable under a Misfortune, which would, perhaps, have been very light to another.

MARRIED at Sixteen, and a Widow at Eighteen, I returned to *London*, juſt at the Time you ſet out for *Vienna*: nothing then promiſed me the conſiderable Fortune I have ſince been Miſtreſs of. Without Ambition, without Fondneſs for Splendour, I did

did not wish for that Fortune! Alas! would my Brother still enjoyed it! What Riches can make me forget him! How willingly would I part with all this idle Pomp to recover a Friend so dear to me! You loved him, my Lord, and you know how justly I regret him. He left us to go into *France*, and I remained with my Aunt, who had been a Parent to us both. Lady *Anne*, her Daughter, marrying Lord *Osmond*, and my Aunt giving up to them her House in *Pall-Mall*, it was fixed, I should continue with Lady *Osmond*.

My Lord *Catesby's* extreme Jealousy had accustomed me to Retirement: I found little Pleasure in the great World: Reading and Music employed all my Time. The Men thought me amiable: they told me so; but, without being insensible to the Pleasure of Admiration, I was infinitely so to the

Cares of my Lovers. I laughed at their Tranſports; and, ridiculing the Follies of which Love made them guilty, I fancied Reaſon and Pride would always ſecure me from its Power.

Soon after my Couſin's Marriage, we left *London* for *Hertfordſhire*. Lord *Oſſory* and Mr. *Aſhby* returned, at that Time, one of them from *France*, and the other from *Italy*: As they were both Friends to my Lord *Oſmond*, they were invited to *Hertford*; they ſet out directly, and arrived together. I was with Lady *Oſmond*, when my Lord preſented them to her: The Moment I caſt my Eyes on one of them, my Taſte was for ever fixed.

Lord *Oſſory* profeſſed himſelf an Enemy to Love: till I ſaw him, I was perfectly indifferent: this Conformity of Humours, on which they ſometimes rallied us, was the

firſt Bond of that Friendſhip, which united us; He talked of Love, but it was always to complain of its Rigor; he ſeemed to know only its Pains. My Heart, which already ſympathized with him, took a ſecret Intereſt in his Diſcourſes; I repeated them to myſelf when alone, and, ſuppoſing he regretted an unfaithful Miſtreſs, I partook of his Chagrin: I was aſtoniſhed how ſhe could ever ceaſe to love him; and it ſeemed to me, that a Woman, who could betray or abandon him, muſt be born more perfidious than all others.

I PAST ſome Time, without attending to the Pleaſure I felt in ſeeing Lord *Oſſory*: I gave myſelf up to it without Reflexion; and only obſerved, that, ſince his coming to *Hertford*, every thing was become more intereſting to me.

MR.

Mr. *Asbby* declared himself my Lover: You know his Passions are lively, but of short Duration; he addressed me with the most impatient Ardour, but that Ardour appeared to me importunate. Lord *Osmond* wished he might please me; he even gave him Hopes, but I destroyed them the Moment he spoke to me on the Subject. Mr. *Asbby* grew insupportable to me; he became melancholy, jealous, impertinent; he quarrelled with me often, and passed whole Days in Hunting to avoid me. My Lord *Offory*, on these Occasions, rallied me on his Absence; told me, laughing, he saw I was afflicted at it, and offered himself to represent Mr. *Asbby*. He took his Place near me, imitated his little Cares; gathered Flowers, and presented them to me with that timid Countenance, that Air of Sadness, from which unhappy Love cannot preserve itself, and which

which adds to the Diſguſt of the beloved Object. My Lord mixed ſo much Grace with every thing he did, that this Pleaſantry, though repeated often, was always new and entertaining: It engaged us to ſeek each other; and when our Converſation took a more ſerious Turn, Lord *Oſſory* lamented Mr. *Aſhby's* Unhappineſs, and told me, he could not conceive any Misfortune equal to that of loving me, and being diſpleaſing to me. One Morning when I had been walking a long Time with Mr. *Aſhby*, by one of his common Caprices, he changed his Humour on a ſudden, and appeared infinitely gay, and lively: my Lord *Oſſory* aſſumed a ſerious Air; I ſaw a Coldneſs in his Looks; I was ſhocked at it; an unknown Emotion took Poſſeſſion of my Heart, and gave me inexpreſſible Torment. I would have ſpoke to Lord *Oſſory*, to aſk him the Reaſon of his Sadneſs; but, far from ſeizing thoſe Opportunities

nities I gave him of approaching me, he did not even ſeem to give the leaſt Attention to my Deſign. The Hours paſt, and the Day was at an End, without his having deigned to addreſs me a ſingle Word. How long did that Day appear! what Deſpite did I feel againſt Lord *Oſſory!* I reſented his Behaviour ſo much, that I thought I hated him. The Moment I was alone, the Tears guſhed from my Eyes; they removed the Oppreſſion of my Heart, and gave me Liberty to reflect on the ſecret Cauſe of that Sentiment, which made them flow.

Why torment myſelf becauſe of my Lord *Oſſory's* Coldneſs? Why deſire to ſpeak to him? What had I to ſay to him? And why intereſt myſelf in the Change of his Temper? Theſe Queſtions, which I put to myſelf, diſcovered to me at once the Paſſion, to which I had given up my Heart, without knowing it.

SHALL I tell you more, my Lord? In confeſſing it, I had alſo the Weakneſs to pardon myſelf this Attachment. I found Lord *Oſſory* ſo worthy to be beloved; the Charms of his Wit, the Graces of his Perſon, his Air, his Features, the Nobleneſs of his Sentiments, a thouſand amiable Qualities, the Virtues he really poſſeſſed, thoſe which my Love added to them; every thing in him ſeemed proper to augment, and to juſtify my Tenderneſs: I vowed never to diſcover my Paſſion, but I vowed alſo to carry it to my Grave.

I APPEARED in the Morning with ſuch an Air of Deſpondency, as made every body apprehenſive for my Health. Lord *Oſſory* diſcovered ſo much Inquietude, ſhewed himſelf ſo touched with my Languor, that the lively Intereſt he took in it diſpelled it in a Moment;

Moment; whilſt I beheld him, whilſt I liſtened to him, my Gaiety returned, and brought back to my Countenance that chearful Luſtre, which Chagrin had baniſhed thence. From that Moment I carefully obſerved the Progreſs of my Conqueſt; my Lord ſhewed the warmeſt Friendſhip for me, but he ſhewed no more than Friendſhip.

The Winter brought us back to Town; I ſaw Lord *Offory* ſeldomer; I became melancholy, thoughtful; I felt a Diſguſt for all thoſe Amuſements, which pleaſed me before I had given away my Heart. Lady *Henrietta* was then at *Venice* with her Father: Deprived of the only Friend with whom I dared to truſt my Sorrows, I kept a perpetual Guard on myſelf to conceal them: Sometimes I bluſhed at my Love; I regretted my paſt Tranquillity; I determined no longer to give Way to my Sentiments; I

ſtruggled

ſtruggled with them; I examined my Lord with Attention; I ſought to find Defects in him; I wiſhed it was poſſible he could diſpleaſe me; but the more I ſaw, the more I heard of him, the more convinced I was that he was truly worthy of all the Love I felt for him.

Mr. *Aſhby*, whoſe Levity was extreme, tired of my Indifference, addreſſed his Vows to Miſs *Germain*; his Infidelity made us Friends: As his new Miſtreſs was often with me, he begged of me not to teach her to uſe him ill. My Lord *Oſſory* had always a Place in our Converſation: We ſpeak, without intending it, of the Object, who is dear to us: His Name is, without ceaſing, on the Borders of our Lips; we would withhold it, but it eſcapes us: We have pronounced it a hundred Times, when we fancy we have not pronounced it once. Whether

Mr.

Mr. *Ashby* penetrated my secret Thoughts, and wished to revenge himself, or whether he really believed what he asserted, he repeated to me continually that he should pity extremely that Woman who attached herself to Lord *Ossory*: He painted him solid, amiable, generous; but insensible. He chagrined me by his Discourse, yet I was never weary of listening to it: Lord *Ossory* was talked of, though to his Disadvantage, and all Conversation, of which Lord *Ossory* was the Subject, had an attractive Charm for me.

I PASSED Part of the Winter in all the Pangs of Suspense; my Lord's Attention, his Assiduity, redoubled; a thousand little Cares, which proceed from the Heart alone, and which the Heart alone knows how to set a just Value on, all persuaded me that I was beloved; but he had never told me so: and that Doubt inseparable from true Passion,

that

that Fear which raiſes Obſtacles to our Deſires, and deſtroys our fondeſt Hopes, made me always diſtruſt thoſe Proofs that I thought he gave me of his Tenderneſs. Whilſt he was with me, the ſofteſt Tranquillity reigned in my Soul, my deareſt Wiſhes ſeemed fulfilled; when he was abſent, I felt all my Inquietudes revive.

We were one Evening in Lady *Oſmond's* Cloſet; every body were at Cards, except my Lord *Oſſory* and myſelf; I was ſtanding, leaning on Lady *Durſley's* Chair, and obſerving her Play. She called my Lord *Oſſory* to aſk him a Queſtion; as he ſtooped down to ſpeak to her, happening to move my Hand, it fell by mere Accident on my Lord's: I withdrew it haſtily, but he, fixing on me the moſt paſſionate Look, carried his to his Mouth, and kiſſed that Part of it which mine had touched. I was affected

by this Action, it ſoftened me, it charmed me; and during the Remainder of the Evening I could not keep myſelf from re-guarding him with a Look of Embarraſment, which told him too plainly what it endea-voured to conceal.

Pardon me, my Lord, if I am prolix in relating theſe little Particulars: this in-human Paſſion has been ſo dear to me, all that relates to it is yet ſo recent in my Me-mory, that it is impoſſible for me to ſpeak on the Subject without recalling every Cir-cumſtance, that led me to give myſelf up to an Inclination which has been the Source of all my Misfortunes.

Early in the Spring we returned to *Hert-ford*; Lord *Oſſory* begged to be of our Party. I felt an extreme Joy at it; I flattered myſelf it was on my Account only; I was charmed

that he preferred me to thoſe Amuſements which public Places offered him: Alas! I was but too grateful for ſo trifling a Sacrifice! Leſs interrupted than in Town, we paſſed whole Hours in thoſe beautiful Gardens which Lord *Oſmond* has adorned with every Charm of Art and Nature. My Lord improved me in the *French* Language, and I inſtructed him in the *Spaniſh*: Our Studies led us to Reflexions, of which our Sentiments were always the Foundation. The Secret of our Souls ſeemed every Moment ready to eſcape us; our Eyes had already betrayed it, when one Day, reading an affecting Story of two tender Lovers, who had been cruelly torn from each other, the Book fell from our Hands, our Tears began to flow, and, ſeized with I know not what Kind of Fear, our Eyes were fixed ardently on each other. He put one of his Arms round me, as if to detain me; I leaned towards

wards him; and, breaking Silence at the same Time, we exclaimed both together. Ah! how unhappy were these Lovers!

A FULL Confidence followed this accidental Discovery of our Tenderness: Lord *Offory* confessed to me the Passion with which, he said, I had inspired him the first Moment he beheld me. He told me the Reasons which he had to resist the warm Emotions of his Heart, naturally inclined to Love. You know he was engaged to Lady *Charlotte Chester*, when the old Marquis of *Dorchester* offered himself and was immediately accepted. Lady *Charlotte* preferred, to an amiable Lover, who adored her, and for whom she pretended an equal Passion, a Title; which she had then no Hopes of with him, he having at that Time two elder Brothers. This ambitious Woman disgusted Lord *Offory* with all the Sex; he believed them

incapable of Tenderneſs or of Fidelity. He left *London*; and, till he came to *Hertford*, preſerved his Fear of engaging in another Attachment; but this Fear was ſoon loſt in the Hope of finding in me a Heart formed for his. He forgot the Marchioneſs, and thought of nothing but of delivering himſelf up to the Love I inſpired, which however he had the Cruelty to conceal from me.

With what Fire did he paint to me that Love! How often did he ſwear, that his Happineſs, that his Life depended on my returning his Paſſion! How melting were his Looks! How ardent his Expreſſions! His Diſcourſe, the very Sound of his Voice, penetrated my Soul: His Words are engraven there in Characters never to be effaced.

Ah! my Lord! What a Moment! The Confeſſion of a Paſſion which one partakes,

is like a ſudden Flaſh of Light, which carries a new Day into one's Ideas. An unſpeakable Charm was diffuſed on every thing around me; every Object became more ſmiling, more amiable in my Eyes; all Nature ſeemed more adorned and lovely. That Garden, where I had juſt learned I was beloved, appeared to me the Abode of ſome benevolent Being, who had withdrawn the Veil which had ſo long hid my Happineſs from me.

Seized with Aſtoniſhment and Joy, how could I hide thoſe rapid Emotions, Emotions to which I had been then a Stranger! And why ſhould I have reſtrained them? I ſuffered him to ſee the Pleaſure his Confeſſion had carried into my Soul; he enjoyed it, and augmented it by his Tranſports, and by the Gratitude with which he received the Vows I made, never to ceaſe loving him.

From

FROM that Inſtant Lord *Oſſory* has engroſſed all the Tenderneſs of my Soul, and I have only breathed to love him.

'TWAS about this Time, the Duke of *Suffolk* came to *Hertford*: he paſſed ſix Weeks there, and conceived that Paſſion for me which he yet preſerves. Why can I not reward him with a Sentiment more tender than Eſteem? So conſtant an Ardour ought to triumph over the Remembrance of an Ingrate. My Lord Duke offered me his Hand, my Refuſal afflicted without offending him: he eaſily imagined that the Rank of Dutcheſs, with an immenſe Fortune, offered by a Nobleman, whoſe Perſon was uncommonly agreeable, and whoſe Character was high in the World's Eſteem, would not have been refuſed without a ſtrong Attachment for another. He ex-

plained himſelf to Lord *Oſmond*, who aſſured him of the contrary; but without being able to convince him. I did not doubt but his Suſpicions fell on my Lord *Oſſory*, and I believed it the more, becauſe he never after pronounced his Name before me; a Piece of Reſpect which I ſhall always acknowledge as an Obligation.

We hid with Care our ſecret Correſpondence, without any other Reaſon than a little Shame for having changed our Reſolutions: we ſaw each other continually, and at Night wrote to each other what we had not been able to ſay during the Day. How dear is that Time even yet to my Remembrance! How happy did I live: What Good is comparable to the Sweetneſs of loving a Man worthy of our moſt tender Affection, who loves us, who tells us ſo, who repeats it every Moment, and whoſe

every Wiſh is loſt in ours! What Pleaſure to expect him, to ſee him appear, to lift up to him thoſe Eyes to which his Preſence gives new Luſtre, to read in his that he thinks us lovely, and that we are ſo happy as to pleaſe him! How flattering to ſee oneſelf the Object of all his Cares, to imagine he feels all the Tranſports he excites, that he enjoys all the Pleaſures that he gives!

Ah, my Lord, why do the Levity, the Inconſtancy of our Hearts, change into Bitterneſs Sentiments ſo ſoft and enchanting! From whence comes it, that of two Perſons, who have equal Power of procuring to each other, ſo true, ſo exalted a Happineſs, one ſhould ceaſe to feel it, and deliver up the other to eternal Regret? Amiable Senſibility! Dear and flattering Preſent! No, it is not you who render us unhappy: our natural Inquietude, our Caprices, poiſon the

Gifts of Heaven, and we laviſh away, without poſſeſſing, the precious Bleſſings which it beſtows upon us.

Six Months paſſed in this agreeable Situation: towards the Middle of Autumn Lord *Oſſory* was obliged to return to *London*, to be preſent at the Marriage of Lord *Newport* with Lady *Mortimer*. He ſhewed an extreme Repugnance to leaving us, and quitted me with an unaffected and lively Sorrow. He wrote to me two or three times a Day; his Letters breathed the Soul of Tenderneſs; he ſpoke only of the ardent Deſire he had to return, to ſee me again, and of the Hopes he had of ſoon being united to me in thoſe ſoft Bonds, he came from ſeeing tied. My Replies expreſſed the Grief his Abſence gave me; and which nothing was able to diſſipate. He returned, and the Joy of ſeeing him again effaced the

Remem-

Remembrance of thoſe tedious Hours I had paſſed without him.

The firſt Tranſports of this Joy being calmed, I fancied I perceived in his Looks an unuſual Melancholy; I aſked the Reaſon of it, with that tender Intereſt which a Heart truly enamoured cannot but take in the leaſt Inquietude of the beloved Object. One Day, as I preſſed him to truſt me with his Sorrows, I ſaw his Eyes wet with Tears: he endeavoured to hide them from me, and turning away his Face, Ah! ſaid he to me, with a Voice broken and interrupted, I have a Reproach to make myſelf, a Reproach which your Goodneſs renders every Inſtant more lively. Do not inſiſt on my explaining the Reaſon of it; if I ſpeak you will love me leſs, you will perhaps no longer love me at all: I am not worthy of the Heart you have given me; no Man is worthy of it. How

much is your Soul above mine! How ought I to bluſh before you! Ah! Lady *Cateſby!* Is this your Lover? Is this the Man beloved by you, who has prepared for himſelf eternal Remorſe?—No, I am no more that happy Lover who once hoped to deſerve you.—This ſtrange Diſcourſe pierced my Heart with Sorrow: I begged him to open his whole Soul to me; he refuſed; I did not dare to preſs him, for Fear of adding to his Affliction: Time ſeemed to ſoften it, and my Curioſity ſubſided. His Love was always the ſame; and, his Grief diſſipating by little and little, I was not obſtinate to diſcover his Secret. Lord *Oſſory* was ſo dear to me, I found ſuch Sweetneſs in ſacrificing every thing to him! How could I renew a Subject of Converſation which might diſpleaſe or afflict him?

We

We were to leave *Hertford* in a Week; Lord *Offory* had prevailed on me to conſent to give him my Hand a Month after our Return to *London:* I wiſhed however to have waited my Brother's Return; whoſe laſt Letters had aſſured me he intended to croſs the Seas in the Beginning of Winter. Lord *Offory* might have expected a better Match than I was at that Time: However, my Fortune was ſufficient to bear the additional Expence which a Wife would occaſion: It put me in a Condition to refuſe the advantageous Settlements he would have made: A Plan of the Marriage Articles was ſent to him; he took Pleaſure in examining them, in ſettling them with me: we were agreed in all Points, when one Evening a Meſſenger enquired for my Lord *Offory* with an Appearance of great Myſtery, and would deliver his Pacquet into no

Hands but his own. He was at Play, and left it to ſpeak to this Man; but, inſtead of coming back, he ſent to beg Lord *Arthur* would take his Cards. At Supper Time one of his Servants came to tell us he found himſelf a little indiſpoſed, and was gone to Bed.

NEVER did my Heart feel any Inquietude equal to what ſeized it at this Meſſage. I did not imagine my Lord was ill, but I was convinced he had received ſome ill News. I ſent *Betty* ſeveral Times to enquire after his Health, and to find out how he was employed; ſhe brought me Word at firſt, that he was ſhut up in his Apartment, and had commanded his Servants not to enter. At length ſhe learnt of his Valet de Chambre, that he wept bitterly, ſeemed in Deſpair, and that he had never ſeen him in ſo ſhocking a State of Mind.

WHAT a Night did I paſs! My Lord *Oſſory* was in the deepeſt Affliction; he ſhut himſelf up; he wept; he had Sorrows, and he did not ſeek me. Had he then Grief he feared to truſt me with? Did he doubt the Intereſt I took in whatever concerned him? He had then Secrets to me. I recalled to Mind his Diſcourſe, and his Embarraſment the Day he returned to *Hertford;* I began to fear, without knowing what I feared. The Idea only that he was in Tears, made mine flow; I was not able to calm my troubled Heart; and the Morning ſurprized me in that painful Suſpence, which one is always eager to get rid of, but of which one often has Occaſion to lament the Loſs.

As ſoon as the Hour allowed, I ſent to know how my Lord did: they returned Anſwer, that he was not in Bed, that he

was dreſſed, and had ſat down to write. My Lord *Arthur*, his Lady, and Son, were the only Strangers remaining at *Hertford:* They left us that very Day. To avoid appearing, I ordered them to ſay I was aſleep, and went to walk by the Side of the Canal: I wandered a long Time without perceiving the Path that I had taken: As I was returning, I ſaw my Lord *Offory*, who advanced towards me; but ſo feeble, ſo dejected, ſo changed, that it was eaſy to judge in beholding him, that ſome fatal, ſome unforeſeen Event, muſt have reduced him to that State. He joined me, bowed without lifting up his Eyes, took one of my Hands, which he gently preſſed between his, and led me to an Arbor, where we both ſeated ourſelves without ſpeaking a Word. I had not Courage to aſk him any Queſtions; he attempted to ſpeak, but his Voice expired upon his Lips: At laſt, falling at my Knees, and hiding his Face

Face in my Robe, he wept aloud, with all the Marks of inexpreſſible Affliction. His Tears, and his melancholy Silence, ſtabbed me to the Heart; I preſſed him tenderly to ſpeak; I wept with him, his Sorrow overwhelmed me; I conjured him to moderate it; to lodge it in my Boſom: He ſeemed to yield to my Intreaties, and raiſed his Head. His Eyes, bathed in Tears, were fixed on mine; our Tears were mingled; he appeared determined to explain himſelf; I again preſſed him to it, when, ſtarting ſuddenly from me, he left me with the moſt precipitate Haſte. I called to him, but in vain; I would have followed him, but had not Strength. All my Fears, my Alarms, were for him alone; I could not conceive what could afflict him to that Exceſs, nor how it was poſſible he ſhould find ſuch Difficulty in opening his Soul to me. Going back to my Apartment, they told me my Lord *Oſ-*

ſory

ſory was gone: two Hours after, they brought me a Letter; it was from him: could I have imagined I ſhould find there the following Words?

"I LEAVE you, Madam, and I leave you without the remoteſt Hope ever to behold you again. How ſhould I dare again to appear before you? I, who have betrayed you? Who, when arrived at the Summit of my moſt ardent Wiſhes, when beloved by you, have not been able to repreſs an unworthy Inclination? Who have expoſed myſelf to the Loſs of ſo precious a Bleſſing? —Ah! Madam! Deteſt, deſpiſe this Monſter, who has deſtroyed your Happineſs, and his own. So near being united to you! ſo charmed with my Fate! ſo proud to reign in a Heart like yours! When you had given me the Preference—Muſt I then!—Yes, the Laws of Honour command—How are you

you revenged! How am I puniſhed!—I loſe you!—Juſt God! I loſe you! Yet of whom can I complain but of myſelf!—So dear as you were to my Heart, ſo preſent to my Remembrance, ought not your Idea to have checked me? But was I then myſelf?—Alas! I ſhall ſee you no more; I ſhall be the Object of your Contempt, of your Averſion.—More unhappy ſtill, a thouſand Times more unhappy if I am ſo, one Moment, of your Regret, of thoſe Tears which I have ſeen flow for an Ingrate, for an inhuman Wretch, forced to deprive himſelf for ever—Ah! pity me, Madam! I dare yet implore your Compaſſion—Why can I not at leaſt confeſs to you—But this horrible Secret is not mine only—I ought to reſpect—Who?—The Author of my Miſery—Is it then poſſible I am reduced to wiſh to be forgot by you?—Yet I cannot forget you! I ſhall always adore you;

you; your Image will be always preſent to me. Adieu! Madam! Adieu! May I not live long enough to hear what you think of an unhappy Man who could never have deſerved you!"

I REMAINED like one inanimate: a Blow ſo terrible, ſo little expected, ſo little deſerved, almoſt annihilated my very Being. Immoveable, and without raiſing my Eyes from that fatal Paper, it ſeemed to me in finiſhing it, that ſome inviſible Hand precipitated me into an Abyſs, and deſtroyed in me every Principle of Life. I remained till the next Morning in a Kind of Stupidity, which ſuſpended all the Faculties of my Soul. Too bleſt if that State had laſted, and if my Reaſon had been loſt with my Happineſs!

LADY *Oſmond* was twelve Miles off, with one of her Relations: She received there the News of the Duel and Death of my Brother. When ſhe returned, ſhe conſulted with her Lord the Means of preparing me to bear this Loſs; being no Stranger to the tender Senſibility of my Soul. They told her the Way I was in; ſhe aſked if I had had Letters from *London*, and finding I had received ſeveral, ſhe concluded I was already informed of the Fate of my Brother. Faintings ſucceeded each other ſo rapidly, I was ſo incapable of liſtening to her, or of ſpeaking, that my Situation terrified her. It was not till the next Evening, when I was come a little to myſelf, that I diſcovered, by the Conſolation ſhe endeavoured to give me, and by the Details into which it led her, that my amiable Brother was no more. I owed my Life to this Increaſe of Affliction:

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my Tears now opened themſelves a Paſſage; their Abundance brought back to me the cruel Power to reflect how wretched I was: It was with Difficulty I hid one Part of my Sorrows, whilſt I gave myſelf up, without Conſtraint, to thoſe for which I had no Reaſon to blush.

I COULD not bring myſelf to return to *London*; I ſtaid at *Hertford*, in ſpite of the Entreaties of Lord and Lady *Oſmond*, who loved me tenderly. I carried my Mourning for my Brother the ſame Lengths I had done that for my Lord *Cateſby*: I would ſee nobody: I found no Pleaſure but in abandoning myſelf to Grief: I ran eagerly to every Place where I had ſeen, where I had converſed with, Lord *Oſſory*; my Cries, my Groans, pointed out thoſe Places where he had aſſured me of his Love, of that Love which no longer exiſted: I bathed with my

Tears

Tears his Letters, his Picture, a thouſand Trifles that he had given me. Engroſſed continually by his Idea, I yet felt only the Pain of being ſeparated, for ever ſeparated, from him: I regretted, without condemning him: I read every Moment that fatal Letter; I ſought in vain to comprehend what he had wrote, and why he ſhould abandon me: I pitied him, becauſe he deſired to be pitied: I neither believed him falſe nor perfidious; my Heart always defended, always adored him. I had loved him, without knowing whether he ſhared my Tenderneſs; and I loved him ſtill, uncertain of the Cauſe of his Flight, without doubting the Nobleneſs of his Sentiments, and could not perſuade myſelf he had deceived me.

I PAST Part of the Day in writing to him, without ever ſending what I wrote: As ſoon as my Letter was finiſhed, an invinci-

ble

ble Repugnance prevented my ſealing it: I read it over, I wept, I tore to Pieces what I had been writing: An Inſtant after, I began another, without being able to determine what Step I ſhould take. My Head, fatigued by a continual Application to the ſame Subject, by all the dark Projects which Sorrow gives Birth to, loſt by Degrees the Faculty of fixing on other Objects. I thought no more of any thing but my Brother and my Lord *Oſſory*. Sometimes I fell into a Sort of Inſenſibility; every Idea was then effaced from my Mind: I returned to myſelf, only to feel my Wretchedneſs with more Force. I invoked the Soul of my Brother; I called him to the Succour of his unhappy Siſter; I begged of Heaven to take away my Life; and I know not how my Reaſon preſerved itſelf in a State ſo near approaching to Madneſs.

I EXPECTED my Letters with Impatience: I did not ſuppoſe I ſhould receive one from Lord *Oſſory*; yet, when I found none from him, amongſt thoſe they brought me, I felt the Deſire I had to ſee them vaniſh. I ran over Lady *Oſmond's*, trembling; I feared to find there a Name which yet I ſought for with Eagerneſs. Alas! it was there only to augment my Sorrows: I learned that he was dangerouſly ill: I forgot every thing, to think only of his preſent State. I wrote to one of my Servants, who was in *London*, to inform himſelf exactly of the Courſe of my Lord *Oſſory's* Diſtemper, and to ſend me every Day an Expreſs with the Account. His Illneſs was long; and, whilſt it laſted, I experienced that Grief may be ſuſpended by the Fear of ſtill greater Affliction. But what a Change did his Recovery make in my Situation! The firſt Uſe my Lord

Oſſory

Offory made of his Return to Health, was to go to St. *James's* Church, where he was married to Miſs *Fanny Montford*. None of his Friends were preſent at the Ceremony; it was celebrated without Pomp; and two Hours after he ſet out, with his Bride, for the North of *England*.

How ſhall I picture to you, my Lord, the Impreſſion this News made on me? It ſeemed that all I loved was a ſecond Time torn from me: I had preſerved, without perceiving it, a feeble Hope; the Inſtant that deprived me of it opened again all my Wound: I knew my Lord *Offory* was no longer mine; I repeated every Moment of the Day, that he never could be: But I had no Idea of the Pang which rent my Heart, when I told myſelf he was another's.

His Marriage explained to me neither his Letter nor his Conduct: Why ſhould Honour engage him to eſpouſe this Lady, whom he then knew not, or knew but ſlightly? and how could Honour impoſe on him a Law for her, which was not more binding in regard to me? I loſt myſelf in my Reflexions; and whilſt I ſunk under the Weight of my Chagrins, whilſt a melancholy Languor deſtroyed my Health, faded my Youth, and robbed me of Repoſe, my Lord *Oſſory* was content and tranquil: His Wiſhes were fulfilled. I painted him to my Imagination loſt in the Tranſports of a ſatisfied Paſſion; as a Lover who ſecludes himſelf from the World, to poſſeſs, without Interruption, the Object of his Tenderneſs: I repreſented him to myſelf in the Arms of his happy Bride, forgetting me in the Boſom of Pleaſures, baniſhing from his Mind thoſe

weak

weak Remembrance of me, which might perhaps ſometimes intrude upon his Heart; but which a Smile, from her he loved, would efface. His Taſte, his Inclination only could have determined him to this Union; Miſs *Montford* was of Birth, but without Fortune; and thoſe who had ſeen her, aſſured me ſhe was not handſome. I am ignorant by what Charm ſhe attracted him.

I WILL not attempt to expreſs to you the Torments of my Heart: To judge of the cruel Emotions by which I was agitated, it is neceſſary to have been in the ſame Situation, and to have had the ſame Degree of Senſibility. Believe me, my Lord, thoſe who have never felt the Miſery of being betrayed by thoſe they loved, by thoſe they loved with Paſſion, can have but a faint Idea of the Sorrows which it is poſſible to experience in this Life. The Loſs of a ſplendid

Fortune

Fortune leaves us at leaſt the Advantage of ſhewing the Greatneſs of our Souls, either by that Moderation which enables us calmly to bear this Reverſe, or by that noble Firmneſs which raiſes us above Fortune itſelf. That Exceſs of Vanity, which reigns in the human Heart, is often a powerful Conſolation under the greateſt Misfortunes. Happy thoſe who can enjoy the ſecret Pleaſure of Self-Admiration! But what Reſource remains to her, who, having fixed all her Hopes of Happineſs on one only Object, ſees herſelf ſuddenly deprived of that Object; and forced to accuſe by her Tears the very Hand ſhe would have choſen to wipe them off, had they flowed from any other Cauſe? To be unhappy, and to be ſo made by thoſe one loves, is a Species of Miſery, not to be comprehended, but by ſuch as have had the ſad Experience.

Lord *Campley* returned from *Venice* at the End of Winter. Lady *Henrietta* obtained his Permiſſion to come down to *Hertford*; the Pleaſure of ſeeing her again, her Softneſs, her Friendſhip, the Confeſſion I made her of all my Weakneſſes, gave a little Eaſe to my Heart. This amiable Friend reſtored me inſenſibly to myſelf: I ſtill felt my Sorrows, but I became capable of concealing them, and of appearing once more in the World. Aſſured that my Lord *Oſſory* was no longer in *London*, and that he had no Intention of coming thither, I reſolved to return: I abandoned that Place where every Object that preſented itſelf to my Eyes nouriſhed my Affliction, and renewed my Regrets.

You ſcarce knew me again; my Condition moved your tender Compaſſion. My Features,

Features, however, recovered their Form, which they had loſt by my extreme Leanneſs: Time reſtored my Bloom, but it could not reſtore either my Gaiety or my Repoſe. I made a thouſand Efforts to forget a perfidious Traitor; ſometimes I believed I loved no longer, but I always remembered I had loved. My Lord *Oſſory* yet excited violent Emotions in my Soul; his Diſtance ſcarce ſecured me againſt him: I carried an Air of Timidity into every Place where it was poſſible I might meet him; every Moment I fancied I ſaw him, that I heard his Voice. My Lord *Penſhurſt*, by a ſlight Reſemblance of him, cauſed an Emotion which you yourſelf perceived. His very Name was ſufficient to make me tremble. I combated the Remains of this Weakneſs; I fancied I was near triumphing over it, when his Return revived in my Heart all thoſe Sentiments, which Time and his Levity ought-

to have extinguiſhed. Never was Aſtoniſhment equal to mine, when I ſaw him enter at Lady *Bellvile's;* his Eyes inſtantly fixed themſelves on me: I felt an Agitation which made me afraid to ſtay, leſt I ſhould betray myſelf. Whilſt all the Company, charmed to ſee him, ran eagerly to embrace him, and mixed with their Compliments of Condolence on the Death of his Wife, a thouſand Felicitations on his Return, Lady *Henrietta* had the Goodneſs to lead me out of the Room: We went away together. You was a Witneſs of my Confuſion; I in vain endeavoured to hide it: The ſtrange Perturbation of my Senſes diſcovered to you Part of my Secret. Lord *Oſſory* was every Day at my Door; he found it ſhut to him alone; he intereſted one of my Women, whom he knew, in his Favour; and prevailed on her to beg for him one Moment's Converſation with me. He wrote to me;

he

he followed me every where; his Obſtinacy alarmed me; I felt that Lord *Oſſory* could never be to me an indifferent Perſon. Aſhamed to find ſtill this Senſibility, I thought it my Duty to fly from the Danger of ſeeing him, of liſtening to him: Do you now, my Lord, think you ought to accuſe me of *Cruelty, of Inflexibility, for having refuſed to receive Lord* Oſſory's *Viſits, for ſending back his Letters without deigning to open them, for not deſiring any Explanation with him?* What Regard do I owe him? What Motive ſhould engage me to hear him? Ah! What can he have to ſay to me, after having ſo long forgot me? He has too well informed me that he is able to live without me, to be happy without me! Ah! that he had been always ſo! Yes, that he had been always ſo, but far removed from me! If you know where he is, if you write to him, beg him to renounce the Project of appeaſing me, of

ſeeing me. Me, his Friend? Ah! God! I cannot be ſo.

I AM ſorry Heaven has ſnatched from him her whom he loved, whom he preferred to me: but why ſhould his Loſs be a Reaſon for reproaching me? Is it for me to conſole him? Adieu, my Lord! keep my Secret: Do Juſtice to my Sentiments; and if you wiſh I ſhould believe the tender Friendſhip you profeſs for me ſincere, ſpeak to me no more of Lord *Oſſory*.

LETTER XV.

Wedneſday, WINCHESTER.

I WAS not able to write to you Yeſterday. I was fatigued, I was even ill: I kept my Chamber. This light Indiſpoſition gave great Pleaſure to Sir *Harry;* he would ſtay with me; I knew not what to ſay to him;

I deſired

I desired him to sing; he has a clear, melodious, agreeable Voice. Indeed, my dear *Henrietta*, it recalled to my Memory those soft seducing Sounds—And must I always think of him?——Won't you chide me? I abuse your Complaisance; I say the same Things incessantly; nothing can dissipate those Ideas; I surprise myself sometimes in a Humour for which I make myself a thousand Reproaches. 'Tis said that Solitude inclines us to Misanthropy; I should imagine the great World infinitely more proper to produce that Effect, if the natural Indulgence of a good Heart did not temper the Bitterness of those Reflexions which the Understanding cannot help making. In observing the Inconsistencies, the Absurdities and Insignificance of so many Persons amongst whom one must live; those who think themselves exempt from such Follies ought to regard themselves, in the

midſt of theſe Extravagants, as a healthy Perſon environed with Crowds of the Sick. It would be unjuſt to bear them Ill-will for not enjoying as nouriſhing a State of Health as ourſelves.

LAST Night every body aſſembled in my Apartment: They rallied my Lord *Clarendon* on a Paſſion which he has a long Time preſerved, though the Object of his Attachment little deſerved ſuch Conſtancy. This Paſſion has rendered him very unhappy during the laſt five Years. What think you of this Subject of Pleaſantry? Could you ſuppoſe, any one would find Amuſement in recalling to another's Remembrance, the moſt painful Moments of his Life? Ah! What a Manner of thinking muſt they have, who can find Pleaſure in tearing open the Wounds of a tender Heart! My Lord *Clarendon* attended with Complaiſance to this cruel

cruel Raillery: He ſhewed both Senſe and Good-nature by the Manner in which he bore it: But he caſt down his Eyes, he was embarraſed — Tell me, my Dear, why we bluſh to have been deceived? We are then aſhamed to have Sincerity, and to ſuppoſe it in others. From whence comes it, that one feels humbled by being diſcovered to have a Credulity, of which, if one examined the firſt Principles, one ought rather to be proud? If it is by our own Sentiments we judge thoſe of others, Diſtruſt is not natural to a virtuous Soul: Ah! Can thoſe poſſibly ſuſpect Deceit, who feel themſelves incapable of practiſing it!

I PARTOOK the Pains of this poor Nobleman: Perhaps my Concern proceeded leſs from a generous Compaſſion, than from a lively Retroſpect to my own Misfortunes: I will not however examine too narrowly

into the Cauſe. I have to ſeek for Reaſons to weaken the Idea I have of Goodneſs: thoſe Moraliſts, who, ſetting up for Scrutinizers and Judges of the Soul, to vilify it, degrade its moſt exalted Operations, only furniſh me with Conviction againſt themſelves. Now we are on this Subject, I thank you for the little Book you have ſent me. The Author writes well, but does he think well? I would have People impelled to write by a more diſintereſted Motive than that of diſplaying their Wit. The Spectator ought to be a Model for thoſe who ſtudy to penetrate the Secrets of the human Heart. Why employ thoſe Efforts to afflict us, which might as eaſily tender to us Conſolation? Would it not be better to elevate the Soul than to abaſe it? It is from Examples of Goodneſs, of Greatneſs, of Generoſity, that Men aſpire to be good, great, generous. Thoſe who would render

their

their Knowledge uſeful, ought to aſſiſt us to profit of thoſe Seeds of Rectitude which Nature has ſown in our Hearts. To rob us of the Merit of owing to our Efforts Part of our good Qualities, to attribute every laudable Action to Vanity or Self-love, is to diſcourage us in the Race of Virtue. To talk to us only of our Weakneſſes, is like reminding an unhappy Perſon, every Moment, how much he is to be pitied: if we are unable to conſole him, ah! why thus inform him that he is miſerable? To an Evil which is incurable, Lenitives alone—But, good God! Is it for me to reaſon, to criticiſe the polite Sir *James Williams?* See the Danger of Reading; I have almoſt wrote a Book too. Adieu! I love you with all my Heart.

LETTER XVI.

Thurſday, WINCHESTER.

WHAT a ridiculous, what an impertinent, what a vexatious Adventure have I met with! Happily diſengaged from Sir *Harry*, who is twelve Miles from hence, I intended to take Advantage of his Abſence, to enjoy the Pleaſure of walking alone. As I croſſed the Walk I was in, to gain the Park, I ſaw Sir *James*: He had followed me without letting me perceive it. This Meeting extremely diſpleaſed me; I knew it was then impoſſible to avoid hearing him: Determined to liſten to him, I had already meditated on my Reply—But, my dear *Henrietta*, could you believe it? Could you

you imagine the Effect his Diſcourſe has produced in my Heart, my weak unguarded Heart? Sir *James* began, by telling me, *that the only Motive of his Journey to* Wincheſter, *was* — he heſitated *to find* — to ſeize *the Opportunity* — which Chance had now given *him* — in ſhort — *to render me a Homage* — he again heſitated; but, emboldened by my profound Silence, he drew the moſt lively, the moſt animated Picture of his Ardour, of his Sufferings, of his Reſpect, of his Paſſion — My God, of whatever he pleaſed; my Dear, I gave him no Interruption — Alas! I was too diſtant from him! — His Confuſion, his Embarraſment, his Expreſſions almoſt the ſame; the Place, the Hour, the Seaſon, the very Day, ſo preſent to my Memory; all recalled the Idea of Lord *Oſſory*. I ſeemed again to hear that Voice ſo ſweet, ſo adored, thoſe flattering Promiſes, thoſe Vows ſo cruelly betrayed:

my

my Head ſunk on my Boſom, forgetting Sir *James*, his Confeſſion, his Love; forgetting Prudence and myſelf. I gave a Looſe to my Tears; I abandoned myſelf to a Sorrow, the Marks of which I was unable either to reſtrain or to conceal. I know not what Sir *James* ſaid, I know not what he thought of an Emotion ſo extraordinary: I am ignorant how long this ſingular Scene laſted. We heard my Lady *Sunderland*, ſhe came towards us: Sir *James* ſtruck into the Wood, and your fooliſh Friend croſſed into a cloſe Walk, that ſhe might not be ſeen, and haſtened to write to you.—Surely, I have loſt my Reaſon—What can Sir *James* think?—I muſt ſee him again in an Inſtant —that Thought is inſupportable.

LET-

LETTER XVII.

Thurſday, Midnight.

SIR *James* did not appear at Dinner: he complained of the Head-ach, and came down very late. He ſeemed melancholy, and I was embarraſed. I cannot expreſs to you how much I fear an Explanation. I will avoid it, if I can. Muſt my Lord *Oſſory* then be always preſent to me? Can nothing efface the Remembrance of that Ingrate? Muſt he afflict me without ceaſing? —— What an Idea muſt Sir *James* entertain of a Woman, who weeps becauſe an amiable Man loves her tenderly!

A Man

A Man whoſe Birth is equal to hers, whoſe Fortune is very conſiderable — Oh, my dear *Henrietta*, I have a Heart incomprehenſible, feeble, and, I think, contemptible. Thoſe Qualities, thoſe Virtues, which were the Baſis of our Friendſhip, you alone poſſeſs; for me, I have no more than the Appearance of them. A cruel Paſſion, a Conſtancy ill placed, have deſtroyed my natural Diſpoſition, and changed my Character. I ſtill retain the ſame Principles, but I ſwerve from them: I act contrary to the cleareſt Lights. I cannot riſe above this vile half of myſelf, this feeble Machine, to which the leaſt Impulſe brings back the Impreſſion of its firſt tender Emotions. Chide me harſhly, I entreat you: I ſtand in need of your utmoſt Severity.

But by what ill Fate muſt Sir *James* and Sir *Harry* perſecute me? I can love nothing;

nothing; I would not be beloved. The one is ſilent, purſues me every where, and is angry: The other ſpeaks in a Tone of Voice, and with Expreſſions that — Have Men but one Language? — Why has his made me call to Remembrance? — Am I ſo much to blame, my Dear? Tell me — You are ſo kind to my Faults, that my Friendſhip for you forces me to reproach them doubly. If you find me ridiculous, yet do not love me leſs.

LETTER XVIII.

Friday, WINCHESTER.

YOU are afraid your Letters are long, that they tire me: You, my dear *Henrietta*, to think you can tire me? Be assured, that, absent from you, my only Amusement is to read those amiable Letters. The Sentiment which makes them dear to me, will never produce Sorrow in my Soul; my Tears will never efface those beloved Characters: I shall never remember with Shame the Pleasure I feel in reading them — Alas! who could have foretold me that those, from whence I once received so pure a Joy, I should now not dare — When I received them, I was happy, so happy, that all those Blessings, which others

esteem

eſteem, ſeemed to me nothing, to thoſe I hoped to poſſeſs—What a Change did a Day, an Hour, a Moment, make in my Fate!—That Letter, that fatal inexplicable Letter—The Perfidious, to ſwear to me that he adored me, to explore my Pity!—Ah! my Dear, I cannot forget him—No, I cannot! What I have wrote to my Lord *Caſtle-Cary* has given new Life to that ſincere, that ardent Tenderneſs, which nothing can ever deſtroy. I have ſtruggled againſt the Shame of yielding to the extreme Weakneſs of my Heart. My Pride has ſupported me in this painful Effort. I believed I might depend on my Reaſon; I flattered myſelf—Vain Hope! I can never ceaſe to think of Lord *Oſſory*. His Abſence makes me wretched: From whence comes this? do I then think he ought to be ſenſible of mine? can I ſuppoſe my Diſdain has not diſengaged him? was it

to

to be followed that I fled? have I the Meanneſs to deſire it?—Alas! I know not; but I did imagine he would have ſeen Lord *Caſtle-Cary*, that he would have endeavoured to ſee you—I am become fantaſtical, unjuſt: When he is mentioned to me, I am angry; when he is not, I am afflicted. In deſiring to ſee me, he irritates me: He deſiſts; his Neglect diſpleaſes, it offends me. My God! is this your Friend, is this a Woman of Senſe, who is ſo inconſiſtent with herſelf? My good, my tender Friend, love me for us both, for I ſincerely hate myſelf.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

Saturday, WINCHESTER.

SIR *James* has wrote to me. His Letter is tender; *he loves me, he will not tell me ſo. He does not dare to aſk the Subject of my Tears; he ſhall never forget that Moment. He ſees that my Heart is pierced with a Grief which he reſpects.* He concludes with aſſuring me of his eternal Love. —Eternal, my Dear, they all promiſe an eternal Love. The firſt Proof Sir *James* will give me of this eternal Love, and of his Submiſſion, is, to hide thoſe Sentiments, which he is ſure of preſerving for ever. I have anſwered him politely, and accepted his Silence only. I am ſorry to have in-

ſpired him with Tenderneſs. If I cannot make him happy, I wiſh, at leaſt, not to have made him miſerable. He is amiable; he would have been agreeable to me, if any one could be ſo.

You are ſure my Lord *Oſſory* is not at *Bath*. They have not ſeen him at *Hertford*. Lady *Oſmond* does not name him amongſt thoſe who are with her. She preſſes me to return to *Hertford!* to ſee again thoſe Scenes! Ah! I will not go to *Hertford*.

Here is Sir *Harry* quickly returned, and returned the very ſame as when he left us. I received him very well; not well enough however, for he has a very diſcontented Air—*Your Ladyſhip is writing*—a profound Sigh, and the tireſome Creature walks off—Ah! no, he comes back, loaded with a Baſ-

ket of Hyacinths and Narciſſuſſes, with which he is going to ornament my Cloſet. Whilſt he is buſy arranging them — *My Ladyſhip is writing* — to the great Regret of Sir *Harry*. I feel that nothing can be more impolite; but if I was to ſhew the leaſt Gratitude for his little Civilities, he would overwhelm me with them. 'Tis quite enough to bear all his ill Humours in Silence: He has ſo many with me, that I often examine myſelf to find if I have not done him ſome Injury. That which makes his Preſence tedious, and his Tenderneſs painful to me, is my thinking that in his Heart he calls me ungrateful. In Effect, why treat him ill? What have I to reproach him with? An Embarraſment! A Deſire to be with me, which leads him to follow my Steps, perhaps in Spite of himſelf! An extreme Submiſſion! A Paſſion to pleaſe me, which he ſcarce dares to let me ſee! — If you ſaw

with

with what Application he is employed in his Work — poor Sir *Harry* — they ſay one is unjuſt when one loves: One is much more ſo when one does not. What Right have I to be impolite to Sir *Harry?* Becauſe he wearies me, muſt I afflict him? Ought I to abuſe the Power which his Weakneſs gives me over him? Do we owe nothing to thoſe we make ſuffer? I will go talk to him — But what ſhall I ſay? — I will aſk him for Snuff, what o'Clock it is, what Kind of Weather; let fall my Handkerchief, to give him the Pleaſure of taking it up. One muſt be obliging.

Lord *Caſtle-Cary* begs my Pardon: He finds I was in the right: But he cannot conceive what can have made ſuch a Change in my Lord *Oſſory's* Character: He ſhould not have known him again by his ſtrange Conduct in regard to me. Adieu! my dear and tender Friend.

LET-

LETTER XX.

Sunday, WINCHESTER.

AH! Great God! What Emotion! What Surpriſe! Under a Cover in an unknown Hand, a Letter from my Lord *Oſſory* — Yes, from him — It is his Hand — My God! It is from him! — From whence comes it? — Who brought it? — How! — Wherefore! — He write to me again! — To me? — What would he with me? — My Hand trembles — My Pen drops from my Fingers — I muſt take Breath.

THEY cannot tell me from whence this Letter comes. A Man on Horſeback gave

it to one of my Servants, whom he enquired for—Can Lord *Offory* be in this Country?—Behold me like a Fool; like one diſtracted—Like—But to what can I be compared but to myſelf?—I cannot write—My Head is diſordered—O, my Dear, if you could ſee me—That Letter—It diſtracts me.

ALAS! What is become of that happy Time, when the Sight of that Writing would have melted my Heart with Softneſs? At preſent, it terrifies me—It gives me Diſorder inexpreſſible—O, my Dear *Henrietta!* Why am I not with you! Why cannot I repoſe in your Boſom the Pangs I feel! They are ſo exquiſite, they are of ſuch a Kind—I cannot deſcribe them; but I ſink under them.

WHAT

WHAT Power has this Man over me! I once believed he had that of making me happy: he has loſt that, he has loſt it voluntarily—Muſt he then ſtill retain the cruel Power of afflicting me?—I wiſh to hide myſelf, to forget myſelf, to loſe my very Being—This Letter—I know not what to do. How unhappy am I! When Time ſeemed to have weakened my tender Sentiments, and diminiſhed my Chagrin, this Ingrate returns to Town, his Caprice excites him to ſee me; and when, to avoid him, I leave all who are moſt dear to me, he torments me even here; he writes to me: he has the Cruelty to write to me.

THIS Cover! This Artifice—When I ſend back the Letter to *London*, how ſhall I convince him I have not read it?—He is not himſelf ſincere enough to believe me on

my Word—So artful—But what can he write to me?—Dare he attempt to juſtify himſelf? How can he?—Ah! It is neither Love nor Friendſhip which prompts him to importune me; it is Vanity. He cannot bear to ſee himſelf ſcorned: he writes to triumph over my Reſolutions; to prevail over my Pride, over my Reſentment—After two Years of Forgetfulneſs, dare he flatter himſelf, that I yet think of him?—Is this Weakneſs or Curioſity?—Whence comes this Deſire of ſeeing me?—Yet what have I to fear?—Has he any Reproaches to make me?—I will read his Letter; I will anſwer it—But ſee—Lady *Southampton!* Alas! Why have not I a Soul like hers? Adieu!

LETTER XXI.

Sunday Night.

HE complains of me, my Dear *Henrietta!* He has the Preſumption to complain, to teach me Leſſons of Generoſity! The Huſband of *Fanny Montford* is aſtoniſhed at my Inconſtancy! He expected from me other Sentiments—And all this with a Haughtineſs—Read, read, I entreat you, the Copy of his inſolent Letter—This unfaithful Man has not the leaſt Idea of the Sorrows he has inflicted on me—But is it poſſible for a Man to comprehend the Miſeries which he may cauſe?

To Lady CATESBY.

TO fly an unhappy Man, to reject his Submiſſions, to abandon him to his Remorſe, to deſpiſe his Repentance, to reflect without Pity on what he deſerves to ſuffer; is the Behaviour of a Woman devoid of all Sentiment, who, thinking herſelf injured, gives herſelf up to all the Fury of Reſentment, and from whom, indeed, one has no Right to expect more Softneſs or Complacency.

BUT to open her Heart to the generous Emotions of Pity, to compaſſionate the Fate of him, who is the more to be lamented, becauſe he has merited thoſe Miſeries under which he groans; to forget, to pardon, to remit to him as a Friend, Part of his Offences as a Lover; to grant ſome Indul-

Indulgence to the Penitence of a Criminal; to hear him, at leaſt, is what I expected from the noble, the enlightened Soul of Lady *Cateſby*.

But ſhe is changed! ſhe is no longer that faithful Friend, that tender Miſtreſs, whoſe Love nothing could weaken! Her Letters, the only Conſolation of my Exile, the only Balm of my afflicted Soul; thoſe Letters, ſo dear, ſo often preſſed fondly to my Lips, ſo often bathed with my Tears; thoſe charming Letters, all that now remains of my paſt Happineſs, they ſtill tell me you have loved me; but your Eyes have contradicted their pleaſing Aſſurances, and your Departure has too well confirmed my Misfortune, and convinced me of your Hatred.

AH! Lady *Cateſby!* Lady *Cateſby!* Is it then you, who treat me with this inhuman Cruelty? You, who have a thouſand Times promiſed me your eternal Eſteem? How are you certain you are not unjuſt? You have received Wrongs, I confeſs; but you are ſtill ignorant of which Kind they are: Till now, I have not been at Liberty to explain my Conduct: Condeſcend only to hear me, Madam: In the Name of all that is dear to you, do not refuſe this Conceſſion to a Man who adores you, who has never ceaſed to love, to admire, to regret you. In ſpite of the ſtrongeſt Appearances, believe me, he is not unworthy the Favour he now preſumes to aſk.

PARDON

PARDON the Manner I have taken to engage you to read my Letter. One of my Servants waits your Reply at the Farm."

That inhuman Cruelty! How do you know you are not unjuſt? Could you have imagined he would have dared to doubt, whether I have acted juſtly in regard to him? *Thoſe Letters bathed with his Tears*—From whence are thoſe Tears? From what Cauſe?—Ah! Let them ſtill flow! Let him weep! He has betrayed that *tender Miſtreſs*, who preferred him to all Mankind; who lived for no other Purpoſe than to love him; whoſe ardent Vows to Heaven had only for their Object the Happineſs of this cruel—Ah! Let him weep—How ought he to reproach himſelf!—That *faithful Friend* may abandon him without being *inhuman* or *unjuſt*—Inſolent Supplicator! *He does not believe himſelf unworthy the Favour he aſks*—Examine

well the Style of his Letter — Shall I reply to it? — I know not — What can I ſay to him? — But I feel myſelf diſordered — I cannot go on — My Dear, my amiable Friend, why did I leave you, and at a Time when I had ſuch need of your Counſels? My Lord *Oſſory* was the Cauſe —— Alas! Have I ever known an Affliction of which he was not the Source?

LETTER XXII.

Monday, WINCHESTER.

I AM yet in Suſpence what I ought to do: The oftener I read Lord *Oſſory's* Letter, the more am I enraged againſt him. Becauſe I am capable of a juſt Reſentment, my Soul is no longer *the ſame, he once knew it*: A mean Condeſcenſion would, in his Opinion, become me better than what he is pleaſed to call, an *inhuman Cruelty*.

O, my Dear *Henrietta*, theſe Men regard us merely as Beings placed in the Univerſe for their Amuſement; to trifle with,

in that Species of Infancy, to which they are reduced by thoſe impetuous Paſſions, which they reſerve to themſelves the infamous Liberty of avowing with Confidence, and ſubmitting to without Shame. They have left to that Sex they preſume to deſpiſe as weak and irreſolute, the difficult Taſk of reſiſting the ſofter Impulſes of the Heart, of conquering Nature herſelf. Slaves to their Senſes alone, when they appear to be ſo to our Charms; it is for themſelves they purſue, for themſelves they addreſs us: They conſider only the Pleaſure we are capable of beſtowing: They withhold their Eſteem from the Object of their pretended Adorations; and if they find in us Strength of Mind, and Dignity of Sentiments, we are *inhuman Creatures:* We paſs the Limits their Tyranny has preſcribed to us, and become *unjuſt* without knowing it.

I AM

I AM piqued — I will anſwer him — I will wait however till the Bitterneſs, which I cannot hide, is a little moderated — I will not ſee him — I will never ſee him — I will endeavour not to write with Severity, that I may remit to Lord *Oſſory*, who ought to be indifferent to me, Part of the Offences of a Lover, whom it is my Duty to hate. —— No, there is not an Expreſſion in his Letter which does not wound my very Soul —— *I know not of what Kind are thoſe Wrongs* —— How can he ſay this? Has he not betrayed me, quitted, abandoned me? Has he not deſtroyed my deareſt Hopes? Has he not deprived me — Alas! of himſelf, of the only Object of my tender Attachment? Has he not done me all the Injury that was in his Power? and is is poſſible I can *pardon* him? Why had I not Reſolution to tear his Letter the

Moment

Moment I ſaw the Hand? Why muſt he— This ungrateful Man has made it his whole Happineſs to trouble, to deſtroy mime.

LETTER XXIII.

Monday, paſt Midnight.

WOULD you believe it, my dear *Henrietta*, I cannot write to Lord *Oſſory*. I have twenty Times begun a very ſhort Letter without being able to finiſh it. Every thing which I would wiſh not to ſay, offers itſelf readily to my Mind; Reproaches flow ſpontaneouſly from my Pen: I ſtudy to ſeem indifferent, and my Senſibility breaks out in ſpite of me: No Expreſſion, either of Coldneſs or Moderation, pleaſes

pleaſes me: My Heart, carried away by a rapid Emotion, pants to explain itſelf without Diſguiſe. I muſt wait a little.

Two o'Clock.

I SHALL never be able to write this Anſwer: I write, I eraſe: After all, why do I torment myſelf? Is it neceſſary I ſhould write to him? Perhaps it is, for he may interpret my Silence a Conſent to ſee him —If he ſhould come hither—So near as he may be—He has no Eſtate in this Country—Is it Chance, or the Deſire to find me, which brings him? Do not, my Dear, ridicule my Anxiety; do not ſay, I love him—Alas! how is it poſſible I can ſtill love him? It is not Love which thus takes up all my Thoughts—It is—I know not what it is; but I am moſt unhappy. I am retiring to Bed; but without Hope of finding

finding Reſt. Pity your tendereſt Friend, pity her, without examining too deeply into the Cauſe of her Sorrows: We have often agreed in pronouncing it Cruelty, to refuſe Compaſſion to thoſe Miſeries, which may to us appear light and trifling: It is not the Species of Suffering, but the Senſibility of the Sufferer, which ought to excite our Pity: Alas! I am then very worthy of yours.

LET-

LETTER XXIV.

Tueſday, WINCHESTER.

I ENCLOSE a Copy of my Anſwer. I never knew before the Difficulty of writing, when one wiſhes to uſe a Language foregn to the Heart: It is an oppreſſive Burden, from which I am at laſt relieved. Could you believe, that, during the Hour which has paſt ſince my Letter was diſpatched, I have twenty times wiſhed it were poſſible to recall it? I am afraid that it is too diſobliging—That it may afflict him. I have read his again with Attention: It appears to me in a new Light: Thoſe very Expreſſions that excited my Anger, now move my tendereſt

dereſt Compaſſion: How affecting is that Paſſage where he ſpeaks of my Letters! *He preſſed them to his Lips, they were his only Conſolation* — But what were then his Sorrows? *His Exile!* If he had loved me! —Ah! how could he have wedded another, if his Heart — I can comprehend nothing — He ſays he is unhappy — I would not think he is indeed ſo — Alas! if he had ſuffered as I have done — had taſted that bitter Cup, had felt ſuch unutterable Anguiſh! — how ſhould I pity him! How eaſily would my Pride yield to the Sweetneſs of conſoling him, of reſtoring Joy to his Soul! My Tears begin to flow; they will not be reſtrained, I cannot ſupport the Idea of his Grief, of thoſe never-ceaſing Sorrows of which he ſpeaks. Though Reflexion ought to convince me they have never in Reality exiſted, they preſent themſelves every Moment to my Imagination;

and

and though Reaſon rejects the pleaſing Deluſion, my Heart too eaſily gives it Admittance.

"*To Lord* OSSORY.

I NEITHER expected your Complaints, my Lord, nor the Requeſt which accompanies them: The Time in which an Explanation of your Conduct was intereſting to me, has long been paſt: If it ſometimes finds a Place in my Thoughts, it is like the Remembrance of a painful Dream, which the Morning diſſipates, and of which one only retains a melancholy and confuſed Idea. It is of little Conſequence to me to know the Motives which engaged you to reſtore me to Reaſon and myſelf; it is ſufficient for me that you did ſo. I do not think I depart at all from my Character, in refuſing to ſee you, in refuſing it in the moſt determined Manner. I can never regard you as a Friend,

a Friend, to whom I am obliged to remit ſuch Offences as are neither pardonable in a Friend nor a Lover. Ought he, who could abandon me ſo long to the uncertain Conjectures of my own tortured Mind, to the Suſpicions which I could not but entertain of his Tenderneſs and his Probity, to be aſtoniſhed at my Indifference? Has he a Right to reproach me? Why ſhould I ſeek to know the Circumſtances of my Wrongs, when I cannot doubt of the Facts? I know enough to make me perfectly careleſs as to thoſe Particulars, I may yet be ignorant of: I expect, from the Complaiſance I have forced myſelf to ſhow in writing to you, a Favour which I have a Right to demand. Give me back, my Lord, thoſe Letters, the Style of which recals to your Memory, thoſe Sentiments which I bluſh ever to have felt, and do not complain of a

Heart

Heart which has been noble enough never to complain of yours."

Don't you find, my dear *Henrietta*, a Species of Falſhood in this Manner of writing? It is, indeed, what I ought to think, but it is not what I do think. That haughty Indifference is not in my Heart; I am ſorry I have ſent this Letter—Why ſhould I diſſemble? Would it not have been better to have ſpoke ſincerely, to have confeſſed the real Situation of my Soul in regard to him? To have ſaid, *I perhaps love you ſtill, but I no longer eſteem you: I renounce you; the Conſtancy of my Sentiments is no Proof that I believe you worthy of my Attachment: It is in my natural Character; the indelible Features of which have engraven on my Soul a Weakneſs, which once was dear to me, and of which I ſtill love the Remembrance: It does not depend on you, but on the lively Impreſſions*

which

which my Heart has received. Like one who beholds his own Image with Complacency, and takes Delight in contemplating the Object, without thinking of the Glaſs which preſents it to View; ſo I pleaſe myſelf with recalling the Idea of my Love, without thinking with the leaſt Degree of Pleaſure of my unworthy Lover.

THIS had been more noble, more open and generous; I wiſh I had done it. I hate Diſſimulation, I hate even the Appearance of it. But the Letter is gone — I have long loſt the Habit of being pleaſed with myſelf; Regret ſeems attached to every Step I take. Of all thoſe good Qualities, I once fancied myſelf Miſtreſs of, there only remains the Knowledge of my Faults: And of all other Bleſſings I once promiſed myſelf, your Friendſhip is the only true and real one I poſſeſs.

LET-

LETTER XXV.

Wedneſday, WINCHESTER.

CERTAINLY, my Dear, my Head is a little diſordered. I am unquiet, agitated: I count the Hours, the Moments; Time ſeems to me uncommonly long. I expect, without knowing what I expect. The leaſt Noiſe ſets me a trembling; if my Door opens, my Heart beats. Every Time my Servants paſs in or out of my Apartment, I look at them with Eyes which ſeem to require ſomething of them: I hear a tedious Repetition of, *What would my Lady have?* —— Ah! Good God! Your

Lady knows not what ſhe would have— Can you divine, my deareſt *Henrietta*, the Cauſe of all this Emotion? O how low, how mean, how ſhameful it is! — It is the Expectation of an Anſwer — No, I cannot ſuffer myſelf to betray ſuch Weakneſs.

I WISH to leave this Place, to fly from ſo dangerous a Neighbourhood: Yet, if my Lord *Oſſory* is determined to ſee me, to ſpeak to me, where can I be ſecure againſt this obſtinate Reſolution? He will find a Way to ſatisfy it; he may obtain from Chance, perhaps from my Weakneſs, the Converſation he ſo preſſingly demands: Are Men ever weary of any Purſuit in which their Caprice engages them? They are never humbled by our Repulſes; this is one of the Advantages they reſerve to themſelves. Has a Woman the Misfortune to love, to love too tenderly? Does ſhe grow weary of

of her Lover? What Reproaches, what Perſecutions is ſhe not obliged to ſuffer? She may baniſh him; but he returns, he ſeeks her every where, he purſues her; he complains, threatens, beſeeches, ſighs, abandons himſelf to his Paſſion; being heard, is a Conſolation he will not refuſe himſelf. He is very little anxious, whether this Conduct gives Uneaſineſs or Diſguſt: His Soul is not delicate enough to be wounded by the Idea of becoming importunate. Attentive to himſelf only, nothing can make him renounce a Good of which he flatters himſelf with the Poſſeſſion; and often, by the Force of Obſtinacy, he obtains, if not the Heart, at leaſt the Perſon, the ſtrongeſt Object of his Attachment. He, when he finds his Chains heavy, breaks it, and abandons us without Pity: He ſees not our Tears, he hears not our Complaints. Our native Softneſs, a decent Pride, force us to hide our Sorrows.

 ---Ah!

—Ah! How is it poſſible we can be ſo weak to give up our Hearts! Love is to us the Source of ſo much Wretchedneſs—A Reflexion ſtrikes me, my Dear; it is that I muſt certainly weary you: I tell you my Thoughts as they riſe, and Heaven knows they contain nothing amuſing—O, how diſpleaſed am I with myſelf, how little pleaſed with others!—There is Sir *Harry*, who has the Vapours, and ſwoons away like a Woman. He was with me this Morning; his Vertigos ſeized him; I knew not what to do to bring him to himſelf. I could find nothing but a Bottle of perfumed Water; I threw it all on his Face: His Siſter cried out, I ſhould poiſon him—I hope he will come here no more; at leaſt, that he will find ſome other Place to faint in. Adieu!

LET-

LETTER XXVI.

Thurſday, WINCHESTER.

NOTHING yet from my Lord *Oſſory*. Not anſwer me! It becomes him well to behave with Haughtineſs—He is diſpleaſed, perhaps—Was my Letter ſo cruel?—The vain Creature cannot ſupport the Style of Indifference from a Woman who once expreſſed ſuch Tenderneſs for him; that of Hatred would have offended him leſs—Ah! If I was to write to him at preſent—But no more, let us not think of him.

I HAVE received two Letters from my Lord *Caſtle-Cary*; he complains of you.

I will tell him, he is in the wrong; but to you, I muſt ſay, he has reaſon for his Complaints. You laugh at his Jealouſy: You are to blame: If you had ever felt its Horrors, you would not allow yourſelf to imbitter his Torments by theſe Pleaſantries. With a tender and generous Nature, is it poſſible you can ridicule an involuntary Emotion, which affects the Soul with ſuch exquiſite Sorrow? It is a Folly, you ſay, and an Extravagance: It may be ſo, but it is a Folly which wounds one to Deſperation. It is in the Anguiſh of a Man who adores her, that Lady *Henrietta* finds Amuſement: *He ought to be ſure of your Tenderneſs, to know you, to believe you.* Does Love then liſten to Reaſon? By reflecting on my own Sentiments, I have, perhaps, acquired ſome little Knowledge of the human Heart. She, my Dear, who can laugh at the Inquietude, at the Sorrow of a Man who is attached to

her, either no longer loves him, or deceived herſelf when ſhe imagined ſhe ever loved him.

The Anguiſh of a Lover cannot be indifferent to a Miſtreſs, who returns his Paſſion; ſhe is afflicted, becauſe he is ſad; ſhe weeps, becauſe his Tears flow: She ſeeks to calm, to diſſipate, the Chagrins which ſhe partakes —Ah! How can one give thoſe Pains, and render them yet more bitter by Railleries, by a Gaiety, that —Fie, *Henrietta!* Fie! You have retarded my Lord *Caſtle-Cary's* Happineſs: Soften at leaſt this tedious Time of Expectation, by a Complaiſance which you owe to the Sincerity and Warmth of his Affection. I love him; you know it: And your Faults may fall a little upon me. He writes me Letters of four Pages, all filled with your Cruelties:

you are angry with him, and he is wretched. Pardon him for your Friend's ſake. He does not wiſh to hide you from the World; he deſires to have you admired: Appear, ſhew yourſelf, go every where, he conſents to it: Be lovely in the Eyes of all Mankind; but do not value yourſelf on being ſo in any Eyes but his. Adieu! he deſires me to chide you; I do chide you; but I do not love you the leſs.

LETTER XXVII.

Friday, WINCHESTER.

MY Lord *Offory's* Letter has touched you: You think my Anſwer too *haughty; you do not approve this Exceſs of Severity*—Go on, my Dear, add to my Uneaſineſs. I admire with what Eaſe we adapt every thing to our own preſent Sentiments: you had juſt forgiven my Lord *Caſtle-Cary* when you ſat down to write. Softened by the Pleaſures of a tender Reconciliation, you think I ought to pardon alſo; that it is Cruelty not to pardon. You entreat me, you conjure me, to hear my Lord *Offory*. If I was inclined to give you that Proof of Complaiſance, is it in my Power?—How

can I liſten to him! He no longer deſires to be heard—You pity him! Can you then believe, that after his Deſertion of me, after his Marriage, and two Years of Forgetfulneſs, my Indifference has Power to afflict him!—He wiſhed only to try me: His Vanity perſuaded him, I ſtill loved him; that his leaſt Conceſſions would deſtroy my Reſolutions. Without doubt, his offering to juſtify himſelf, was ſufficient to efface the Remembrance of his Perfidy, of a Treachery of the blackeſt Kind; I ought to have flown to receive the Heart he deigned to reſtore to me: So valuable a Bleſſing merited my eager Acceptance: My Gratitude, perhaps —Inſupportable Inſolence of Men! Intolerable Pride!—I ought, however, to thank my Lord *Oſſory;* his laſt Caprice has been of more Service to me than Time or Reaſon: It has deſtroyed the Remains of that Inclination, over which I feared I could never

ver have triumphed: I could not till now think of this Ingrate without Tenderneſs; at preſent I could behold him, without the leaſt Emotion; I am tranquill: I no longer fear his Sight, his Importunities: Is not this the very Point I have ſo ardently wiſhed to arrive at?—With what Cruelty has he ſought to diſturb the Peace of Mind, to rekindle that Love which he was never worthy to inſpire me with! From whence comes it then that I ever loved him with ſuch Fondneſs? I have been looking at his Picture this Morning; I held it above an Hour in my Hand; I contemplated it without being affected: I am even aſtoniſhed at my former Attachment. Why has that Image alone had Power over my Heart? What is there in him ſo ſeducing? What Deluſion lent ſuch Charms to that Countenance? Where are thoſe Graces which I admired in thoſe

Features?—O, my Dear *Henrietta!* Our Prepoſſeſſion makes all the Merit of the Object we prefer to others: It adorns the Idol of our Hearts; it gives him every Day ſome new Ornament. By Degrees, the Splendor, in which we have clothed him, dazzles ourſelves, impoſes on us, ſeduces us; and we fooliſhly adore the Creature of our own Imagination. This Portrait, once ſo dear, is that of a Deceiver: Alas! I long regarded it as the Repreſentation of a Being almoſt celeſtial!—I cannot ſee him!—I hate him—I hate myſelf—But I love you always.

LETTER XXVIII.

Saturday, WINCHESTER.

YOU die with Deſire, that Sir *Harry* ſhould declare himſelf. Behold him declared, propoſed, and rejected! My Lady *Wilton* painted to me, in the ſtrongeſt Colours, her Brother's Love, his Reſpect, the Silence he had impoſed on himſelf for fear of diſpleaſing me; and, paſſing from his Praiſes to mine, ſhe expreſſed the moſt obliging Deſire of acquiring in me a Siſter as well as a Friend. You will judge of my Embarraſment, my Dear, and of the polite Evaſions it forced me to make uſe of. I urged my Diſguſt almoſt invincible to Marriage, from the little Happineſs I had found,

in that State; my Inſenſibility to Love; the Habit of a Liberty which I could not loſe without Regret. Indeed, I do not make that Uſe of my Freedom, which attaches moſt Widows of my Age to the State; but it gives me the ſame Species of Pleaſure which a Miſer feels in calculating his Riches: He enjoys the Bleſſings which he knows he can procure, and poſſeſſes, in Imagination, all thoſe which the Extent of his Fortune makes attainable. One Man only, ſaid I to her, could have determined me to ſacrifice this precious Liberty; No other will ever have the ſame Aſcendent over my Soul. Lady *Wilton* is ſatisfied with the Reaſons I have alledged; but for Sir *Harry*, to whom ſhe has communicated my Sentiments, he is very far from approving them. There is no living with him any longer; he does not ſpeak to me, does not look at me; contradicts every body; ſcolds other People's

Servants,

Servants, drives away his own, breaks every thing he touches, throws down all he finds in his Way: Goes like an Ideot acroſs the Parterres; and, coming back in a Reverie, ſtrikes his Head againſt the Gate, which is ſhut, aſtoniſhed to find himſelf ſtopped — But how unjuſt is this Sex! Is their Humour a Law? At what is Sir *Harry* angry? Has he a Right to expect his Will ſhould determine mine? I have loved one Creature of his Species — Ah! That is ſufficient—But I have a Letter from you — Alas! Of what do you inform me! That Lady *Egberth* has quitted the Court, has reſigned her Place — How I pity her! How her Misfortune touches me! She is given up to Retirement, to Devotion; and it is my Lord *Weſtbury's* Death which has cauſed this great Change: A very extraordinary one, without doubt: No body had more Reaſon to be attached to the World than this Lady — Ah! my Dear! To loſe a Man ſhe

loved

loved ſo ſincerely; that ſhe had ſo long loved; to have ſurmounted ſo many Obſtacles; to be on the Point of eſpouſing him, and to ſee him ſnatched from her in a Day, in a Moment, by an Accident—I cannot reſtrain my Tears at this melancholy Event. But what Madneſs is it in Men of Rank to run the Hazard in theſe Races, of loſing, without Honour, a Life dear to their Country. and which they ought only to expoſe for it! Are they not reſponſible to their Friends, their Relations, who love them? Was he not ſo to a Miſtreſs, who is plunged by the Loſs of him into Sorrow and Deſpair? Poor Lady *Egberth!* Her Situation, and the Reflexions it has engaged you to make, have melted my Heart. Adieu!

LET-

LETTER XXIX.

Sunday, WINCHESTER.

AH! How ſhall I tell you! How expreſs to you!—Have I Strength to write?—Alas! How could I complain of him?—*Henrietta!* My Dear *Henrietta!* He is ill, dangerouſly ill—Lord *Oſſory* is dying! My God! He is dying—See the Billet which I have juſt received.

"*To Lady* CATESBY.

I HAVE now but a few Moments to live; the Countenances of thoſe about me, and the Reſiſtance they make to my Will, aſſure me of it. It is with Difficulty I obtain Permiſſion

miſſion to write—Alas! Why have I ſo much deſired it!—What have I to ſay to you? You will hear with Pleaſure that the Object of your Contempt, of your Averſion, has finiſhed his wretched Days—— Ah! Lady *Cateſby!* What Cruelty!—But is this a Time to complain of it? Pardon at leaſt the Memory of an unhappy Lover; I have never deceived you: I have loved you always. Thoſe Letters, which you have demanded of me with an Inflexibility of which I thought your Heart incapable, ſhall be faithfully reſtored to you after my Death. Do not, Madam, deprive me of them whilſt I yet breathe."

AFTER *his Death*—— *I ſhall hear with Pleaſure*—Can he believe this, can he imagine it?—Ah! Inhuman!—There remained only this Blow—Ill! Dying, perhaps—Alas! Where is he? With whom? In what Hands?

Hands?—Has he Advice?—Is there any near him?—Oh! This Anguiſh is inſupportable.

The Perſon who brought this fatal Billet returned without ſtopping, without waiting a Moment, without ſpeaking a ſingle Word. How ſhall I find it out?—Abandoned to my Fears, to the moſt lively Inquietude—Ah! pity me! My Heart is torn in Pieces. A feeble Hope dawns upon my Mind: I have ſent to the Houſe, where one of Lord *Oſſory's* Servants paſſed two or three Days. They aſſure me, that Servant came from Sir *Charles Halifax's*, who has lately bought an Eſtate four Miles from hence. I have diſpatched away *John*, with all poſſible Haſte, to inform himſelf if my Lord *Oſſory* is there, with Orders to ſtay wherever he finds him, and ſend me Meſſengers continually, to let me know the State in which he is. In this ſad

Suſpence,

Suſpence, my Eyes and Hands are raiſed to Heaven: Lady *Egberth* is ever preſent to my Idea: I fear—All-powerful God! May my ardent Prayer reach thy awful Throne! May it ſuſpend thy Decree! Vouchſafe at leaſt to change the Object! If the End of one of us, muſt be the terrible warning Voice, to bring back to thee the erring Heart of the other, Ah! Let it be me! Let my Death rekindle in his Soul that Love which is due to thee alone! O, my Dear *Henrietta!* If he dies, you have no longer a Friend.

LET-

LETTER XXX.

Tuesday, WINCHESTER.

HE is a little better; but his Fever is conſtant and violent; happily, the moſt dangerous Symptoms have left him theſe two Days. He has yet Moments of Delirium, in which he is very reſtleſs. Alas! he is not out of Danger! I did not write to you Yeſterday; I can now ſcarce hold my Pen; I am not myſelf; I have not taſted Food. Shut up in my Chamber, I admit no body; it is impoſſible for me either to liſten to, or to anſwer any one. They directed me very well: My Lord *Oſſory* is at Sir

Charles

Charles Halifax's, in the midſt of as good Aſſiſtance as *London* itſelf could have procured him. By a happy Chance, Dr. *Harriſon* is in the Country; he is with him. *John* has wrote me Word, that when he arrived, he found the whole Family in Tears. Alas! I believe him. Who can know my Lord *Oſſory*, and not feel for him? How is it poſſible to avoid loving him? So noble in his Manners, ſo gentle, ſo benevolent; the good Qualities of his Soul are painted on his Countenance; he conquers all Hearts. I never heard him mentioned, without an Encomium following his Name. What Man ever more amiably joined true Dignity with good Nature, with that Familiarity which is not afraid to condeſcend, and which impreſſes more deeply that Reſpect it ſeems to reſign all Claim to? Who but muſt lament, that a Being ſo worthy to exiſt, is going, perhaps, to periſh?—I expect with

Fear,

Fear, with Impatience—But ſome body enquires for my Woman—Ah! What Happineſs!—*A tranquil Night, five Hours Sleep, no Delirium, the Fever conſiderably abated: Dr.* Harriſon *will anſwer for his Life, and even for his quick Recovery.* O, my tender, my ſincere Friend! Give me Joy!—I bleſs God, whoſe Goodneſs has reſtored him to me.—Tears of Pleaſure fill my Eyes!—Ah! may he live! May he be happy! May every Bleſſing he deſires be his Portion! Amiable and dear *Oſſory*, thou accuſeſt me of Cruelty! That thou couldſt read my Heart, and hear the Vows it offers up for thee; How cruel are the Forms which keep me here! Why is it not allowed me to fly to thee! To partake, to ſoften all thy Pains! to bathe thy Face with thoſe Tears, which are drawn from me by that eternal Fondneſs which attaches me to thee! Ah! rekindle all thy Hopes! She, whom thou loveſt,

loveſt, is not *cruel*, ſhe is not *inhuman*; ſhe will pardon thee, ſee thee, love thee!—Ah! my God! Whither does this lively Emotion carry me!—O, my good, my indulgent Friend! Pardon my fooliſh Wandering—I am not myſelf—My Soul is hurried along—But I feel myſelf burning—Diſordered—I cannot hold up my Head; my Eyes are heavy—Alas! What is it that makes me thus?—Adieu! He will live, my Dear! My Prayers are granted.

LET-

LETTER XXXI.

Saturday, WINCHESTER.

I HAVE paſſed three Days without writing to you, my Dear, and I am afraid my Silence has made you uneaſy. I have had a ſore Throat, a Fever, and my Pulſe very irregular: They bled me in ſpite of myſelf. Sir *Harry* would not loſe this Opportunity of ſhewing his officious Zeal: He has taken Poſſeſſion of my Apartment; he does all the Honours of it: This Man is really good; he is unhappy: He ſometimes makes me pity him; but oftener wearies me with his Aſſiduity: I have a Heart too full of Senſibility not to compaſſionate his

his Love, though too much prepoſſeſſed to return it.

JOHN is come back: Lord *Oſſory* is upon the Recovery, and they hope his Health will ſoon be quite re-eſtabliſhed: I feel at preſent another kind of Inquietude, from the Indiſcretion of my Meſſenger—But here is *Abraham*, My Lord's Valet de Chambre—My God, what can he want with me? How my Heart flutters!—So alarmed at one of his Servants! What ſhould I then be, if my Lord himſelf—what Contradictions reign in my weak Heart! A few Days ſince I wiſhed ardently to ſee him, and now the Name only of his Servant diſorders me—He brings me a Letter—Poor *Abraham!* He is ſo overjoyed to ſee me again, he cannot ſpeak to me—But let me read his Letter—It is with

Difficulty

Difficulty he has wrote it—He has been very ill—See, my Dear, what he ſays.

"*To Lady* CATESBY.

HAVE you then deigned, Madam, to intereſt yourſelf in my Life? This Goodneſs touches me to the Soul. But do I owe it to your Compaſſion alone, or to the feeble Remains of that tender Friendſhip—Alas! I ſcarce dare flatter myſelf you preſerve the ſlighteſt Remembrance of it.—How ſweet would it be to me to think it not intirely extinguiſhed; to think it ſtill poſſible the Ardor of my Heart might rekindle it in yours! But you will not hear me. Receive, Madam, my reſpectful Acknowledgments: Without examining into the Nature of that Sentiment which has inſpired you with ſo generous a Concern for my

Danger, I ought to think myſelf bleſt in having excited it."

You ſee he is no Stranger to the Anxiety I have been in for his Life; it is to *John*, my impertinent Servant, I am obliged for theſe perplexing Acknowledgments. But I am forced to bid you Adieu: They wait for my Letter: I would not leave you a Day longer in Uncertainty of what had cauſed my Silence. I muſt write an Anſwer for *Abraham* to take. Ah! my Dear, of what Importance is that Anſwer!

LET-

LETTER XXXII.

Sunday, WINCHESTER.

SEE, my Dear *Henrietta*, into what an Embarraſment I am thrown by my Vivacity, by the Precipitation with which I ſent away *John*, without giving him Orders to conceal himſelf, without commanding him not to mention my Name! The imprudent Creature thought he could not execute his Commiſſion better than by going directly to Sir *Charles Halifax's*, enquiring for *Abraham*, telling him he came from me, and deſiring Permiſſion to place himſelf in Lord *Oſſory's* Antichamber. My Lord, charmed to hear one of my Servants

was ſo near him, and that he came by my Orders, inſiſted on ſeeing him: Mr. *John*, as he told me himſelf, received this Command to enter, with great Pleaſure: he anſwered all my Lord's Queſtions with great Exactneſs: Aſſured him, *his Lady was more dead than alive when ſhe ſent him; that ſhe had a great deal of Friendſhip for his Lordſhip; and was ſcarce ſatisfied with three Expreſſes a Day, which he had the Honour to ſend her.*

If you had ſeen with what Satisfaction this Ideot gave me an Account of his Commiſſion, how he applauded himſelf on the Wonders he had done! After all, I ought only to complain of my own Want of Foreſight. I ſent back *Abraham* Yeſterday without any Anſwer: I excuſed myſelf on Account of the preſent Weakneſs of my Head. Alas! It is not that I moſt fear; The Weak-

neſs of my Heart is what reſtrains me — *Abraham* again — Another Letter — I need not take the Pains to copy this: It is almoſt exactly the ſame with the laſt; except the Addition of much Inquietude on Account of my Indiſpoſition, which no longer exiſts. *See me, Madam, hear me* — Always the ſame. I muſt anſwer it; but what Difficulty do I find in writing to him! His zealous Meſſenger tells *Betty* he muſt not return without a Letter. In proportion as my Fears for his Life vaniſh, my Anger reſumes its Empire over my Soul. I am ſorry Lord *Oſſory* can no longer doubt that Friendſhip, of which he artfully pretends to be ſo uncertain: By this Pretence he humours my Vanity; his Addreſs does not eſcape me. O, theſe Men! theſe Men! Obſerve how they make their Advantage of every thing! When all Means of ſubduing our Reſolves

ſeem to fail, an unforeſeen Incident, Chance, *a Fit of Sickneſs*, brings them to the Point they had in View. We refuſe to ſee, to liſten to them; we fancy all at an End, but their Reſources are never exhauſted. When the diſcarded Lover knows not how to proceed otherwiſe, he has a Fever, my Dear; he has but a Moment to live; he fills our Imagination with Terror; he repreſents himſelf in a Light, which cannot fail of ſoftening us; he places before our Eyes the alarming Idea of his Death, of the Diſſolution of that enchanting Form which firſt ſeduced our unguarded Hearts; and the moſt malignant Fever is not what kills him, no, *'tis our Cruelty.* Lord *Oſſory* has forgot to ſay that—But *Abraham* waits—I never thought I had ſo little Underſtanding; I am quite at a Loſs what to ſay—Oh! That abominable *John!* Why did he not conceal him-

himſelf! But why do I talk thus idly!—Is not he who writes to me, the ſame Lord *Oſſory*, who has cauſed me ſuch exquiſite Afflictions, who abandoned me at *Hertford*, who married *Fanny Montford*? Are theſe Injuries leſſened? No; but *he has been ſick*. I will write to him—I have wrote—I ſhall not ſend you a Copy of my Anſwer; it is very ſhort, very ſtudied, and very bad. Adieu! my Dear *Henrietta!* my Tenderneſs for you is always the ſame.

LETTER XXXIII.

Monday, WINCHESTER.

I COME from taking a Walk on the Banks of a Rivulet, which bathes the Walls of a Pavilion, where I go often to ſee them fiſh. As it was very early, I amuſed myſelf with obſerving acroſs the River ſome young Country Girls, who were going with Baſkets of Flowers and Fruits to the neighbouring Town. They ſung, they laughed in their Boat; they preſented the very Image of Joy; their Habits were neat, their Baſkets prettily arranged. They wore large Straw Hats, under which one is apt to fancy every Face handſome; they were really very agreeable. As the Boat went off, one better made than the reſt arrived; ſhe appeared

peared very melancholy; and, without ſhewing any Regret becauſe they had not ſtayed for her, ſhe ſet down her Baſket upon a Heap of Gravel, and began to walk backwards and forwards by the River-ſide. I bid *Betty* call her; ſhe came to us; I purchaſed all her Noſegays, and aſked her, why ſhe did not ſing like the others? My Queſtion moved her; ſhe endeavoured to reſtrain her Tears, and told me, with a moſt charming Sincerity, that *ſhe was ready to break her Heart; that* Moſes, *one of my Lord* Wilton's *Tenants, had made her die with Grief, ſhe and another: And that the Remembrance of that other made her ſhed a great many Tears.* The poor Child intereſted me; I would know all: and here you have the Hiſtory of my little Gardener. It is, that *Moſes*—Pray attend, my Dear—*Moſes* is a wicked Miſer; he had agreed, that *Tommy* his Grandſon ſhould marry *Sally*,

who loves *Tommy as ſhe loves her Eyes*. The Wedding-Day was fixed, the Clothes were bought, the Relations invited, the Fiddles beſpoke; and behold, a Letter which came from *Oxford*, has induced *Moſes* to change his Mind. *Tommy's* Siſter is dead, and has left him ſome Money, and the *vile Moſes* will not now accept *Sally* for his Granddaughter; at leaſt, not unleſs her Fortune is encreaſed in Proportion to *Tommy's* Inheritance. *Sally's* Mother, who is very proud, has broke off the Match: And, as ſhe is pretty high-ſpirited, ſhe will twiſt *Sally's* Neck off, if ſhe loves the Grandſon of that Jew *Moſes*; and poor *Sally* muſt have her *Neck twiſted off*, for ſhe will always love him; and honeſt *Tommy will break his Heart too*, rather than renounce *Sally*.

BETWEEN the Happineſs and the Miſery of theſe ſimple and tender Lovers, an

hundred and fifty Guineas was an inſurmountable Barrier: I have removed it, my Dear: The Jew *Moſes*, the proud Gardener, honeſt *Tommy*, and pretty *Sally*, are all agreed again. This Moment is one of thoſe in which I have felt the Advantage of being rich: The Day after To-morrow, I am to marry my amiable Villager, and I intend to marry her with Splendor. I give a grand Supper, an Illumination, Fire-works, and Muſic on the Water; which will be followed by a Maſquerade, at which every body will be welcome. My Lord *Wilton* has lent me the Pavilion on the River; it is large, finely ornamented, and very proper for my Deſign. The Ladies are all enchanted with this Feaſt: Sir *Harry*, in ſpite of his ill Humour, is my Steward; he receives my Orders with as much Gravity, as if he was taking out a Patent to be Prime Miniſter. Lady *Wilton*, and Sir *James*, are

to do the Honours of the Maſquerade; Lady *Sunderland* of the Supper; as to me, I ſhall be employed in obſerving whether they acquit themſelves well of the Commiſſions I have entruſted them with. I am gay, my Dear; I begin to reſume my Taſte for Amuſements; I will not examine the Cauſe of this Alteration; I ſhould find it perhaps — Do not fancy, however, that *Sally's* Marriage is a Pretence for celebrating the Recovery of *poor Lord Oſſory* — Is it not thus you call him? — *John*, however, does not know; my Secret is ſafe: Adieu! my Dear *Henrietta!* I wiſh I could ſee you dance at this Ball.

LET-

LETTER XXXIV.

Tueſday, WINCHESTER.

ANOTHER Letter!—A very exact and a very dangerous Correſpondence: I have every Moment Occaſion to remind myſelf that Lord *Oſſory* has betrayed me. In ſpite of this Remembrance, how ſhall I reſiſt the tender Emotions of my Heart? They perſuade me to liſten to him. But what can he ſay? His reiterated Offers to juſtify himſelf, aſtoniſh and offend me. Ah! how is it poſſible! He married; he has even a Daughter by this Marriage—They ſay ſhe is called *Juliet*—Inſolent! To give

my

my Name to the Daughter of his Wife! Lady *Arthur*, Aunt to the late Lady *Offory*, has been here eight Days; ſhe talks continually of the Graces and Beauty of this little *Juliet*: I never met with ſo impertinent a Creature: But I will give you my Lord's Letter.

To Lady CATESBY.

ALAS! Madam! On what do you congratulate me? Of what Value to me is the Life which you refuſe to make happy? From you theſe cold Civilities! Ah! You could not afflict me more ſenſibly than by this inſulting Politeneſs; it is always attended by Indifference. It is your Pity, your tender Pity, which is neceſſary to my Peace; it is the Condeſcenſion of one Day, one Hour, that I entreat of you. Will you not hear me? Am I condemned without

Hope

Hope of Pardon? Will you refuſe me a Favour which is granted to the vileſt Criminals? We have at leaſt been *Friends*—Do you then no longer remember you have given me a ſtill ſofter Name? Our mutual Love, your Promiſes, your tender Vows, are they all effaced? Recall *Hertford* to your Remembrance, my Dear, my adorable *Juliet*—It is a Man once honoured with your Tenderneſs, who begs of you, upon his Knees, one Moment's Converſation. By all that has Power to move you, I conjure you not to reject my Prayer! Do not continue to afflict an unhappy Man, whoſe Fate is in your Hands. No; I will not give up, but with my Life, the Hope of obtaining your generous Forgiveneſs. I have a Secret which I cannot reveal but to yourſelf: Give me one Day, Madam; in the Name of Heaven be not inexorable."

His *Dear*, his *adorable Juliet*; familiar enough, upon my Word: And you ſee with what Obſtinacy he reſolves to be heard. Ah! that Sickneſs! In what has it engaged me! See him! The very Idea of an Interview makes me tremble. But this Audacity of determining to ſee me!—How ſtrangely reſolute! Ought he not to fly my very Looks? With what Face can he appear before me? Have not I a Right to load him with Reproaches?—Yet he is not afraid to ſee me!—Whence comes it then that I am in Dread of him? I, who can lift up my Eyes to him with that noble Confidence, which is the Offspring of Integrity and Innocence? He bids me remember *Hertford!* Alas! If he had ſeen me after his Departure, would he have dared to bid me remember it? He knows the Wrongs he has done me; but how far is he from imagining

gining how exquiſitely I have felt them! Can he ever excuſe that cruel Deſertion? Ah! Why did he ever feign a Paſſion for me? Why does he yet feign it? I had prepared myſelf with Pleaſure for the Entertainment I am to give! This Letter comes to diſturb my Joy, to embarraſs me, to revive the Memory of thoſe Hours —— Ah! nothing has had Power to efface it —You will perhaps laugh at my Chagrins; yet tell me I *ought to have ſeen him, to have heard him, that all ſhould be forgot.* You, who have never had any thing to pardon but the ſlighteſt Faults, a few Emotions of Jealouſy, of Impatience, of ill Humour; perhaps, you think one may reſolve in a Moment; that it is eaſy to determine —I cannot comprehend that Hope of Pardon. My Deſign is not to afflict him: I would ſee him, if I thought I could bear his Preſence: I would hear

hear him, if it was poſſible to excuſe—But I will write to him this Moment.

To Lord OSSORY.

WHEREFORE, my Lord, ſhould I not have forgot long ſince, an Attachment I have found ſuch Reaſon to regret? What ſhould engage me to cheriſh the Memory of the moſt unfaithful of Men? Have you not already made it your Requeſt, I would *forget you?* How can you, without Confuſion, endeavour to recall that Time, and thoſe Scenes, to my Remembrance, which I cannot think of without hating you? What Right have you now to aſk my Friendſhip, after having made ſo cruel a Return to that I was once weak enough to feel for you? If your Levity has reſtored me to myſelf, you ought only to blame your own Heart. I am ignorant what new Caprice makes you aſſert

aſſert that your Happineſs depends on the Converſation you aſk of me; but I cannot prevail on myſelf to grant it. So long accuſtomed to think I ſhould never ſee you again, it is impoſſible for me to ſupport even the Idea of your Preſence. If you have any Secrets it is neceſſary you ſhould communicate to me, I conſent to your writing them: You may depend on my Secrecy, and on my Punctuality, in returning immediately whatever you pleaſe to write. To receive your Letters, my Lord, is the only Complaiſance I can force myſelf to ſhew you."

I AM ſorry I have ſent this Letter: They ſay, that in Lover's Quarrels, Reproaches are the Preliminaries of Peace. Adieu! my amiable *Henrietta!* Believe, I love you always.

LET-

LETTER XXXV.

Wedneſday—no—*Thurſday*.
Six in the Morning.

O My deareſt *Henrietta!* How ſhall I expreſs to you the Tumult, the Emotion of my Heart! I have ſeen him—He has ſpoke to me—It was himſelf—He was at the Maſquerade—Yes, he—My Lord *Oſſory*——Ah! Tell me no more of ſeeing him, of hearing him—I am now certain I am unable to bear the Preſence of that—I know not what Name to give him—Could any thing be more daring, or more imprudent? To expoſe me thus—I think I hate him—

him—I wiſh, notwithſtanding, I had poſſeſſed more Power over myſelf—I wiſh I had heard him. What is then this unknown Emotion, which drags me with irreſiſtible Force, and compels me to act contrary to my Will? I muſt go from hence; I muſt return to *London*—It is not from Obſtinacy, but from Neceſſity, from Weakneſs, I fly Lord *Oſſory*. I muſt reſolve to avoid him, ſince I am not able to ſee him with any Degree of Tranquillity.

The Day was already far advanced, when, fatigued with dancing, and weary of the Ball, I went to take the Air on the Terrace, which joins to the Pavilion. A Maſk in a Black Domino, who had followed me above an Hour, came and ſeated himſelf by my Side. In a Place ſo ſpacious, and where it was apparent I ſought only Solitude, I thought it a little extraordinary he ſhould

chuſe

chuſe the very Seat on which I had placed myſelf, merely to be troubleſome; but judge of my Surpriſe, when, ſeizing one of my Hands, and preſſing it between his, he ſaid, in a faltering and paſſionate Tone, *Does Lady* Cateſby *then ſtill delight in making others happy? I was told that Species of Pleaſure had no longer any Charms for her.* The Sound of that known Voice penetrated the inmoſt Receſſes of my Soul: I knew him inſtantly: Ah! What other Man would have preſumed to take ſuch a Liberty, to addreſs me in ſuch a Style—I would have fled from him; he ſeized my Robe, and held me in my Place. At the ſame Inſtant, haſtily throwing off his Maſk, the Hood of his Domino fell off—Ah! my Dear *Henrietta!* How lovely did he appear! The Diſorder of his Hair gave a new Grace to his Features; an Air paſſionate, animated—How different was the Effect, which the

Sight

Sight of that amiable Countenance had on me, from what might have been expected! I loſt, that Moment, the Faculties of Sight and Hearing: A mortal Coldneſs ſeized me. I am ignorant what Lord *Oſſory* ſaid to me, or how he aſſembled the Company about me: But when my Senſes returned, I found myſelf ſurrounded by an infinite Number of Perſons, amongſt whom my Eyes in vain ſought for Lord *Oſſory*: I perceived him at laſt at the further End of the Terrace, from whence, as ſoon as he ſaw me perfectly recovered, he retired with Precipitation. The Ball is at an End, and I am now writing to you in Bed, full of Reflexion, of Uneaſineſs. I know not how to act. Adieu.

LET-

LETTER XXXVI.

Friday, WINCHESTER.

I HAVE received ſuch preſſing Invitations from Lord *Oſmond*, my Couſin and his Lordſhip continue to entreat me with ſuch Earneſtneſs to come to *Hertford*, that I cannot long reſiſt their Importunities. I know not why, but I feel my Repugnance to return thither greatly abated. I have mentioned my Deſign here; and, if I was vain, ſhould value myſelf highly on the Unwillingneſs which every body expreſſes to part with me. Sir *James* goes away at the ſame time: as to poor Sir *Harry*, his Sorrow is inexpreſſible; it gives me

me extreme Pain: I hope my Abſence will be of Service to him. They tell us, my Dear, Abſence is a ſalutary Remedy for Love; a violent one however, which the Patient takes with Diſguſt, and which does not ſucceed with all Conſtitutions. I am coming nearer to you, my amiable Friend: what Pleaſure do I find in that Thought! After ſtaying ſome Time at *Hertford*, I ſhall return to *London*, and we will go together to my pretty Houſe at *Hampſtead*— Here is *Abraham* —— What a Packet he brings me! all in my Lord's Hand —Permit me, my Dear, to leave you —I burn to read it—What is it he can ſay to me? You ſhall know as ſoon as I have read the Packet over.

To Lady CATESBY.

THE Adventure of the Ball has too well convinced me, Madam, how vain it is to hope, from Chance or my own Addreſs, the Happineſs of a Converſation with you. The Horror my Preſence gave you, the Condition in which I ſaw you, and the Grief I felt at being the Cauſe, have determined me to give up all Thoughts of approaching you without your poſitive Command. I conſent to commit to Writing, what I intended to have related to you on *Wedneſday*, if you had been able to have favoured me with a Hearing. You engage to keep my Secret; I know you too well to have the leaſt Doubt of your Diſcretion: However, as it may be painful to you to conceal from Lady *Henrietta*, a Story in

which you are ſo much intereſted, I diſpenſe with your Promiſe of Secrecy in Favour of this Lady: Whoever is dear to you, acquires, by that Claim, a Right over my Heart: To me it is impoſſible your Friend can be indifferent. Ah! Lady *Cateſby!* If, after reading theſe Papers, you are not inclined to pardon me, you never loved him, whoſe Paſſion for you cannot end but with his Life."

HISTORY

OF

Lord OSSORY.

"WHEN Lady *Charlot Cheſter* had given that Preference to the Marqueſs of *Dorcheſter*, which I flattered myſelf my Aſſiduity, and the Sincerity of my Attachment, had given me a better Right to expect, I determined to avoid her, and went into *France* with that Deſign. I was ſenſibly affected by her Perfidy; it prejudiced me unjuſtly againſt the whole Sex; I judged of all, by the only

one with whom I had had any Connexion; and was ſtrongly perſuaded that Intereſt and Vanity were the only Paſſions of which they were ſuſceptible. I armed myſelf againſt them, with the Knowledge I fancied I had of their Souls, and employed my Experience with Succeſs to defend me againſt the Power of their Charms.

I was repreſented at Court, and where-ever I appeared, as a Savage, who, to that Ferocity attributed to his Nation, joined an obſtinate Averſion to the eſtabliſhed Manners and Cuſtoms of the World. My Gravity appeared ridiculous, eſpecially at a Time of Life when the wild and irregular Sallies of Youth, for which Youth is an Excuſe, are not unbecoming. I know not how far the *French* carry their Indulgence on this Head; but here I have ſeen too many, who, not knowing when to drop this Excuſe, have

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not been able, in their more advanced Age, to forget the Follies of their Youth.

Six Months after my Departure from *London*, my eldeſt Brother was killed in a Sea Engagement; and my ſecond died in *Scotland*, of a Fall from his Horſe in Hunting. My Fortune was now become equal to Lord *Dorcheſter's*, and I fancied Lady *Dorcheſter* might poſſibly repent having been ſo precipitate in fixing her Choice: the Regret I flattered myſelf ſhe would feel, was the only real Advantage I then hoped for, in inheriting the Eſtates and Titles of my Anceſtors.

My Abode in *France* did not remove the Impreſſions I carried thither: I thought the Women charming, but the Idea of Lady *Charlot*, and the Remembrance of her Inconſtancy, defended me from Love. I re-

turned to *London*, cured of my Paſſion, but not of my Reſentment at having been abandoned. The Sight of Lady *Dorcheſter* chagrined me, and gave me a Diſguſt to *London:* I reſolved therefore to quit it once more, and was preparing for a ſecond Tour to *Italy*, when *Oſmond*, hearing of my Return, preſſed me to make him a Viſit at *Hertford:* I accepted his Invitation, intending to ſtay a few Days only; but I found in your Eyes, Attractions ſtrong enough to fix me in my native Country, and reconcile me to that amiable Sex, of which Lady *Cateſby* is the brighteſt Ornament. You inſpired me with Sentiments before unknown to me; Sentiments which convinced me I had never loved Lady *Charlot*, and that wounded Vanity may excite in our Souls thoſe Regrets, which ſeem to take their Source only from betrayed or neglected Love.

Ashby importuned you with his Addreſſes; his Example intimidated me: The Averſion his Tenderneſs gave you to him, determined me to ſpare no Pains to conceal mine. Liſtened to, preferred as a Friend, I dreaded appearing as a Lover. I found it ſo ſweet to be honoured with your Confidence, to make one in all your Amuſements, to behold you every Moment without wearying you, or inſpiring you with Conſtraint; that I had not Courage to riſk loſing all theſe Advantages, by making a Declaration of my Paſſion. Sometimes I fancied you ſaw what paſſed in my Soul: I one Day forgot I had no Right to appear jealous; my Anger and ill Humour became viſible to every body: My Sorrow affected you; it affected you too nearly —— What Pleaſure do I feel in correcting thoſe firſt Moments of my Happineſs! Thoſe bliſsful

Hours, when, without being yourſelf perhaps conſcious of it, you partook of all the ſoft Emotions of my Soul! They are paſt, thoſe tranſporting Moments, and Lady *Cateſby* remembers them no more.

With what Pain did I conceal from you Sentiments ſo tender and animated! How did the Remembrance of Lady *Charlot* intimidate me! I no longer regarded her Inconſtancy in the ſame Light; ſince I had loved you, I excuſed her Levity; and concluded, I poſſeſſed none of thoſe Attractions which give Birth to Love, and render it laſting. I at length preſumed to confeſs my Paſſion; my Vows were heard; you yielded to give me your Hands: Every thing conſpired to promiſe Happineſs to my future Days. In the Intoxication of my Joy, too ready to flatter myſelf, I added to my Account of preſent Pleaſure, the ſupreme Felicity which was

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ſo ſoon to be my Portion, when I received an Invitation to be preſent at the Marriage of Lord *Newport*. I know not whether a Foreboding of my Misfortune encreaſed my Regret at parting from you, but I left *Hertford* overwhelmed with Sorrow. Before I enter into the humiliating Detail of the fatal Adventure which ſeparated us, permit me to implore your Indulgence.—But how can I hope to ſoften you, if I am no longer dear to you; if my very Sight alarms you; if that Heart, once ſo ſenſible to my leaſt Inquietude, is now for ever barred againſt me? What repeated Vows do you betray, if the Care of my Happineſs no longer intereſts you! Cannot the Remembrance of a Paſſion ſo dear to us both, of thoſe pure and exquiſite Pleaſures it once beſtowed, rekindle in your Boſom a Spark of that Fire which my ſeeming Infidelity has extinguiſh-

ed? Ah! Madam! Let Love again ſpread a Veil before your Eyes, to hide from you my Fault, and only permit you to ſee my Repentance.

I WAS returning to *Hertford*, with all the Haſte and Impatience of a Lover, eager to behold again the Object of all his Wiſhes, when, on the Road, I happened to meet with *Montford*, *Bennet*, *Anderſon*, *Lindſey*, and ſeveral others, who had been my Acquaintance at the Univerſity; except *Montford*, who was my particular Friend, I had ſcarce ſeen any of them ſince I left the College: They had ſtopped *Abraham*, who was a little before me; and, when I came to the Poſt-houſe, where they waited for me, they inſiſted on ſtopping me alſo. They were returning from Hunting, and were going to ſup with *Montford*, whoſe Mother had a Houſe

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in the Neighbourhood. It was impoſſible to reſiſt their Entreaties, or, to ſpeak with more Propriety, their Importunities: They obliged me to accept an Invitation which promiſed little Amuſement to a Man of my Temper, and robbed me of the Pleaſure of arriving ſoon enough that Night at *Hertford*, to ſee you even for a Moment. Theſe Hours were ſtolen from Love; I loſt them with inexpreſſible Regret, and made the Sacrifice with an extreme Repugnance. *Montford's* Mother was gone, that very Morning, to *London*; whither ſhe was called by unforeſeen Buſineſs: Thus our Supper became one of thoſe noiſy and libertine Parties, from whence Order and Politeneſs are baniſhed; which ſometimes end in ridiculous Wagers, and often even in breaking to Pieces every Moveable in the Way, and cutting each others Throats amidſt the Ruins. Diſguſt ſeized me during the firſt Courſe; it encreaſed

creaſed every Moment: The inſupportable Mirth of my Companions, in which I could not ſhare; the confuſed Noiſe of their Voices, all ſpeaking at the ſame Time; and the unbounded Freedom of their Converſation, made me curſe a thouſand times the Hour in which I was ſo unfortunate to meet them. The Coolneſs I preſerved in the midſt of theſe Madmen, added to the Diſtaſte they inſpired me with. I perceived it; and, willing to remove ſome Part of the Horror I felt at my Situation, I fancied the only Means would be to loſe, like the reſt, a Portion of my Reaſon: I could not now reach *Hertford* early enough to ſee you; I reſolved therefore to do as others did, and endeavour to partake of their fooliſh and contemptible Gaiety: My Project ſucceeded; I drank freely, and began ſoon to find my old Companions a little more ſupportable.

The Converſation turned on a Variety of Subjects, none of which were purſued very far: It fell at laſt on Women; they talked with more Vivacity than Decency: Some praiſed them in the ſtrongeſt Terms, others ſpoke of them with the moſt illiberal Contempt. *Lindſey*, naturally tender and polite, defended them with Warmth: He brought the whole Company over to his Opinion, that the Sweetneſs of being beloved by one, infinitely ſurpaſſed the malignant Pleaſure of ſlandering them all. We now vyed with each other in extolling theſe charming Beings, on whom Heaven has beſtowed the Power of rendering us happy. One ſpoke of their Beauty, the Charms of which have ſuch an Empire over our Hearts; another extolled their Wit, ſtill more enchanting, the Fineneſs of their Taſte, and the Delicacy of their Sentiments. *Montford* alone inſiſt-

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ed, that an uncultivated Underſtanding, and ingenuous Modeſty, infinitely exceeded that Knowledge, and thoſe Accompliſhments, on which Women of Condition value themſelves, and that the moſt ſimple were the moſt amiable: The Point was warmly diſputed; he perſiſted; and, to prove the Truth of what he advanced, ſent Orders to his Siſter's Governeſs to join the Company with her lovely Charge. A Man muſt have been as little capable of Reflexion as he then was, to think of expoſing a Siſter to the Impropriety of appearing in the midſt of ten or twelve young Libertines, flushed with Wine, and little in a Condition to recollect what they owed to her Rank, her Sex, her blooming Seaſon of Life. Whilſt we waited in Expectation of her Entrance, *Montford* informed us, that ſhe came only the preceding Day from the School, in which ſhe had been educated; he expreſſed the moſt lively

Friendſhip for her, and aſſured us no body could be more ſimple, or more amiable. The young Lady came to confirm, by her Preſence, the Praiſes her Brother had laviſhed on her ingenuous Simplicity: Her Air expreſſed her Character; ſoft, modeſt, unaffected: A noble Form, graceful in all its Motions, compenſated for the Want of perfect Symmetry: She had all thoſe Charms which accompany the firſt Bloom of Youth; and her Features, without being regularly beautiful, were all together infinitely attractive. She placed herſelf by her Brother; and, in Obedience to his repeated Commands, pledged his Friends in thoſe Healths which they all at once eagerly propoſed to her. Her Preſence having re-animated their Joy, it was happy for her that her extreme Simplicity made her ignorant of the Tranſports ſhe excited, and of the Expreſſions in which they magnified her Charms. *Bennet*

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took Charge of the Governeſs, and ſoon rendered her incapable of attending to the Care of her lovely Pupil. Miſs *Montford*, weary of a kind of Converſation to which ſhe was not accuſtomed, inſiſted on Leave to retire: She obtained it, though with Difficulty; and quitted us with much greater Pleaſure than ſhe had felt at coming amongſt us. Some Moments after, diſtracted with Noiſe, and fainting with exceſſive Heat, I roſe up to go into the Air, of which I had never more Occaſion: I walked through the Hall, and found myſelf in a Paſſage, in which there was no Light: I obſerved one at ſome Diſtance, and directing my Steps that Way, traverſed a long Gallery of Pictures, at the End of which, I came to a large Cloſet, where I perceived a Woman alone: I had not Time to diſtinguiſh who ſhe was; riſing up haſtily, ſhe threw down a little Table, on which ſtood a Candle, which went

went out in the Fall. By the Sound of her Voice, and her Queſtions, I knew it to be Miſs *Montford*: I told her who I was, and begged the Favour of her to direct me to the Garden, where I was going to walk for the Air: She told me ſhe would ring immediately for a Light; but in the profound Darkneſs we were in, it was impoſſible to find the String of the Bell, the Apartment being almoſt as new to her as to myſelf. She ſtrove however to recollect where the Chimney was placed, and we both took a great deal of Pains to find it. My Embarraſment, and the ill Succeſs of our Searches, appeared ridiculous to her; ſhe laughed ſo heartily at our Diſtreſs, that her Gaiety excited mine. The young Lady was not much more herſelf than I was; ſhe called, but in vain; the Servants were at too great a Diſtance to hear us: As we walked at ran-dom,

random, we ſtruck our Heads againſt each other; Miſs *Montford* redoubled her Laughter, ridiculed my Uneaſineſs, and, by a thouſand childiſh Pleaſantries, forced me to laugh alſo. Determined both of us, however, to put an End to this Scene, we agreed to give up all Hopes of making ourſelves heard, and to endeavour to find a Door into another Gallery, which led to the Garden. Miſs *Montford* took me by the Hand, and, going from one Chair to another, found the Place where ſhe was ſitting when I entered the Cloſet: She told me, the Door was then directly oppoſite to us; ſhe advanced, and I followed her: unhappily ſhe entangled herſelf in the Table ſhe had before thrown down, and fell with Violence to the Ground; her Fall occaſioned mine; I was alarmed for her, but her repeated Burſts of Laughter ſoon convinced me ſhe was not hurt. The Exceſs of her Mirth had

had an extraordinary Effect on me: it inſpired me with a Preſumption fatal to us both: The Intoxication of my Reaſon communicated itſelf to my Heart: abandoned to my Senſes, I forgot my Love, my Probity, the Laws of Honour, which had always been ſacred to me, the Siſter of my Friend: A Woman whom I ought to have reſpected, appeared to me at that Inſtant, only as a Female delivered up to my Wiſhes, to that groſs Paſſion which has its Source in Inſtinct alone. Hurried away by an impetuous Emotion, I had the Cruelty to take Advantage of the Diſorder and Simplicity of a young Imprudent, whoſe artleſs Innocence alone occaſioned her Error.

Scarce was this Moment of Madneſs paſſed, when, Reaſon reſuming all its Rights, I ſaw my Fault in its full Extent: the unhappy

happy Victim of my Crime pierced the Air with her Cries; ſhe groaned, ſhe wept, and by her juſt Anguiſh encreaſed mine, already too great for Expreſſion. The Moon juſt then began to riſe, and her dawning Light enabled me to find that Door, the Search of which had been attended with Conſequences ſo fatal: Confuſed, aſhamed, in all the Wildneſs of Deſpair, I thought of nothing but Flight: I went out of that Cloſet, which inſpired me with Horror; and, paſſing from the Garden into the Court, where my Servants waited, I ſtept haſtily into my Chaiſe, and took the Road to *Hertford*, pierced with the moſt poignant Sorrow, which my Reflexions rendered every Moment more inſupportable.

How ſeverely was it renewed at the Sight of you! With what Goodneſs did your ge-

nerous Heart intereſt itſelf in my Affliction! What tender Queſtions! How did they ſtab my Soul with Remorſe! How did I abhor myſelf when I reflected I had betrayed you! The Pleaſure, however, of ſeeing you, of being continually near you, of thinking I was dear to you; the Idea of my approaching Happineſs; an invincible Charm attached to your Looks, to your Converſation, all together alleviated my Sorrow. I was beginning to conſider my unhappy Adventure as a Weakneſs, of which the Remembrance might in Time be loſt, when its dreadful Conſequences brought it back to my Memory with redoubled Force, and obliged me to ſubmit to the juſt Puniſhment of my Imprudence! Ah! what a Puniſhment! If you have loved me, if you have deigned to regret me, judge of my Sufferings by your own! Judge of my Tortures in forcing myſelf from you! From you,

you, whom I adored, whom I muſt always adore, in whatever Manner you may treat me! You may poſſibly remember, Madam, that a Meſſenger enquired for me, the Evening before I left *Hertford*: He brought me a Letter; it was from Miſs *Montford*, and expreſſed in the following Terms.

"*To Lord* OSSORY.

THE unhappy Siſter of your Friend, the wretched *Fanny Montford*, is loſt, diſhonoured, by the Indiſcretion of her Brother, by yours, my Lord, and ſtill more by her own. She tells you this, without knowing what ſhe has to hope from this Step: She has nothing to expect from you; you promiſed nothing: What Right then can ſhe pretend? And yet, if you abandon her, have

have you nothing to reproach yourſelf with? I ardently entreat your Anſwer: If it does not ſoften the Horrors of my Situation, I will not wait till my Shame becomes publick: I have already reſolved on the only Means by which I can eſcape Infamy: I will bury with me this dreadful Secret, and nobody ſhall ever reproach you with the Misfortune or the Death of

Fanny Montford."

PAINT to yourſelf, Madam, my Condition after reading this Letter: Think in what Reflexions I paſſed that Night, the laſt of my Stay at *Hertford*. I formed a thouſand Projects; my Reaſon deſtroyed them, as faſt as they preſented themſelves to my Imagination. I thought ſometimes of going to *Montford*, of confeſſing my Crime, and of giving up to his Siſter half

my Eſtate; all, if ſhe required it. Alas! of what Value was Wealth, if deprived of you! But how could I have the Confidence to propoſe to my Friend a Reparation, which, in a parallel Caſe, I would not myſelf have accepted? After having injured him, ought I to inſult the Miſery I had cauſed? To riſk becoming the Murderer of him whoſe Siſter I had diſhonoured, in Violation of all the ſacred Laws of Hoſpitality and Friendſhip? The little Innocent too, Madam, who owed to me its Being, was I allowed to place it in the Rank of thoſe born to Wretchedneſs, to deliver it up to Baſeneſs and Contempt? Would it not bring into the World a Right to accuſe me, to abhor the Author of its Exiſtence? The Concluſion of the Letter froze my Veins with Terror and Apprehenſion. In the midſt of Agitations not to be deſcribed, of Regret which tore my in-

moſt Soul; wholly engroſſed by my Love for you, wild with Deſpair at loſing the Object of all my tender Hopes; I reſolved to liſten only to the Voice of Honour, and to give up the deareſt Intereſts of my Heart to the Perſon whoſe Situation demanded this cruel Sacrifice.

What Struggles had I with myſelf! How much did this painful Effort coſt me! It was you whom I abandoned! It was you whom I muſt renounce! I went to ſeek you, determined to repoſe my Sorrows in your faithful Boſom, to confide to you my Crime, and my Deſigns; to implore your Advice, your tender Commiſeration; but my Purpoſe vaniſhed at your Sight. How was it poſſible I could make you ſuch a Confeſſion! I found myſelf unable to begin the ſhocking Recital; I had not even Courage to give you a Letter I had wrote in

the firſt Tumult of my Grief: I left you; I bid Adieu to *Hertford*; and quitted you in the melancholy Perſuaſion I ſhould never ſee you again. I left my Letter with *Abraham*, whom I ordered to deliver it to you when I was gone; and, joining the Meſſenger, who waited for me at the Poſt-houſe, I took the Road to *Middleſex*, and went directly to Lady *Montford's*.

The Violence of thoſe different Emotions with which I was agitated, and the Efforts I made to hide my Sorrow, threw me into a burning Fever: I was in a kind of Delirium, and ſcarce knew even myſelf. As ſoon as I arrived, I enquired for *Montford*; as he was in Town, they introduced me to his Mother: After ſome Moments of indifferent Converſation, I mentioned her Daughter; and, finding ſhe had no particular View for her, I demanded her in Marriage.

My Offer was received with no leſs Joy than Surpriſe: Lady *Montford* could not hope ſo advantageous a Match for her Daughter; though of a Family which might entitle her to a Rank equal to what I offered to raiſe her to, yet her moderate Fortune ſeemed to forbid ſuch a Hope. Her Mother conducted me to her Apartment, and introduced me as a Lover who was ſoon to become her Huſband. Miſs *Montford's* Face was ſpread with Bluſhes at ſeeing me, ſhe caſt down her Eyes, and regarded me with a melancholy and timid Countenance. As is cuſtomary on theſe Occaſions, we were left together; Shame and Remorſe threw me at her Feet, Gratitude made her fall at mine: Neither of us poſſeſſed the Power of Voice; Sighs and Tears were the only Expreſſions of our Hearts. I fixed a Day with Lady *Montford* for ſigning the Marriage-Articles,

and pretending preſſing and indiſpenſable Buſineſs, parted in haſte for *London*.

I REACHED my Houſe in an Agony, not to be conceived: I was pierced to the Soul with my own Sorrow, and yet more with that which I imagined you would feel. As I entered my Cloſet, a Drawing done by your Hand ſtruck my Sight; I could no longer reſiſt the violent Emotions of my Heart: I gave myſelf up to Rage, and uttered Exclamations, which drew all my Servants around me: A kind of Phrenzy deprived me of my Senſes: During a long Time, I knew nothing that happened to me; I was inſenſible of my Illneſs, and of my Danger. My Spirits, enfeebled by the Violence of my Tranſports, and by the Medicines which were given me, had reduced me to the Weakneſs of Infancy. *Montford* never

never quitted me; what he had been told of my Intentions in regard to his Siſter redoubled his Attachment, and rendered his Cares more tender, and more attentive: He applauded himſelf on the Caprice which inclined him to make her appear at that Supper; he fancied ſhe had then inſpired me with Love, and this Belief filled him with Tranſport: His Diſcourſes on this Subject gave a new Poignancy to my Sorrows. I recovered at length, and married Miſs *Montford.* What Difficulty had I to reſtrain my Tears at the Foot of that Altar, where it was ſuppoſed I had received from the Hands of Heaven the only Companion who could make my Life happy! After having thus torn me from her who only has that Power, indulgent Heaven is willing to reſtore her to me: But ſhe is changed; ſhe is become haughty, inhuman, unrelenting; ſhe will not pardon me.

I LEFT *London* for *Derbyſhire*, whither I conducted a Wife, young, ſoft, tender, grateful, perhaps amiable; but ſhe was not Lady *Cateſby*; ſhe was not the dear Object my Heart had made Choice of; whom I muſt alway love, but to whom I could now only dedicate Sighs, Tears, and a fruitleſs and unprofitable Regret.

LADY *Offory* was delivered of a Daughter; the Sight of her gave me the firſt Emotion of Joy, which I had felt ſince I left you. Amiable little Innocent! How often have I bathed her with my Tears, whilſt I applauded myſelf on having at leaſt fulfilled my Duty towards her! Ah! what Tenderneſs would ſhe not owe her Father, if ſhe knew at what a Price he had given her a Right to call him by that Name!

I PASSED whole Days in the Woods to avoid Lady *Ossory*; I feared her Presence; her amiable Attention to please, was irksome to me: I had all the Regard for her which Friendship demanded, but none of the tender Solicitudes of Love: I owed her both notwithstanding; but how could I give to her a Heart you had already entire Possession of? Conscious I ought to make amends by my Generosity for the Coldness of my Sentiments, and ever ready to procure for her Pleasures of which I was incapable of partaking, I gave her Balls and Entertainments; I loaded her with Presents; she disposed as she pleased of my Fortune; it was all lavished on her, even to Profusion; she seemed satisfied, and I believed her happy; Time discovered to me she was no more so than myself.

Sometimes I had an Inclination to write to you, to open my whole Soul, and inform you of my Reaſons for a Marriage which muſt have ſurpriſed you ſo greatly. But it was my Wife, the Mother of my lovely Infant, whoſe Weakneſs I muſt have diſcloſed. Ah! How could I confeſs to you there had been a Moment of my Life in which I had forgot I loved you! In which I had failed in that Probity, on which the Eſteem you had honoured me with was founded! Lord *Preſton*, my Friend from my Infancy, was alone entruſted with the Secret of my Paſſion for you; he knew it even before yourſelf: To him I addreſſed myſelf to make Enquiries about you. I heard from him that you continued at *Hertford*, where you were plunged in Grief for the Death of your Brother—Ah! Pardon to a deſpairing Paſſion, the ſtrange Contrariety of its Wiſhes!

What

What would I not have given to have rendered you happy, to have reſtored Tranquillity to your Soul? And yet I felt a ſecret Pleaſure in thinking you were at *Hertford*, that you were there alone, that you were afflicted; that it was poſſible I might have a Right to ſome Part of thoſe precious Tears; that, amidſt the Sorrows due to the Loſs of a beloved Brother, a Sigh might ſometimes eſcape towards a Lover who adored you. Your Return to *London* gave me the moſt lively Inquietude: You received the Duke of *Suffolk's* Viſits; jealous, unjuſt, I trembled leſt he ſhould obtain a Bleſſing to which it was no longer in my Power to pretend.

I RECEIVED every Week a circumſtantial Detail of all your Actions: The Kind of indirect Correſpondence I ſeemed by this Means to keep up with you, was the only

Pleaſure for which I had now the leaſt Reliſh. How did theſe Details touch my Heart! How did they augment my Eſteem, and my Attachment! What Woman at your Age ever conducted herſelf with ſo much Prudence! Or ever blended ſo engagingly the moſt auſtere Wiſdom, with the moſt amiable Vivacity, and exacteſt Knowledge of the World! What other ever poſſeſſed in the ſame Degree thoſe ſoft, thoſe gentle Virtues, which give ſuch Charms to ſocial Life! That polite and indulgent Condeſcenſion to others, which renders that Superiority beloved in you, which you are yourſelf afraid to diſplay in half its Luſtre!— Ah! Lady *Cateſby!* Is it to excite the unmeaning Admiration only that Heaven has ſhowered on you its moſt precious Gifts? There has been a Time in which you thought you had received them for no other Purpoſe than to make me happy.

AFTER a Year's Stay in *Derbyſhire*, Lady *Oſſory* was attacked by an Indiſpoſition which ſeemed to threaten a Conſumption; immediate Aſſiſtance a little re-eſtabliſhed her Health; but in the Beginning of the Winter ſhe fell again into a Languor which made every one apprehenſive for her Life. Her Danger, her amiable Reſignation, and engaging Sweetneſs, during the Courſe of her Diſtemper, affecting me infinitely, I became aſſiduous about her. When I reflected on my Conduct towards her, I was afraid I had given her Cauſe to be unhappy; I redoubled my Cares and my Attention, to efface the Impreſſion which my Indifference might poſſibly have made on her Mind: I never left her Chamber; I gave her all her Medicines with my own Hand. I felt in thoſe Moments all the Force of the Bond which unit-

ed

ed us; I had not fulfilled its Duties, and I reproached myſelf bitterly for my Neglect.

I SUPPORTED her one Day to gain a little Gallery, in which ſhe had an Inclination to attempt walking: Her Weakneſs forced her to be in a Manner carried in my Arms: After going a few Steps, ſhe turned back into the Chamber, ſeated herſelf; and, ſtill leaning upon me, perceived that I preſſed her gently to my Boſom: She ſeemed ſurpriſed, regarded me attentively; and, ſeeing in my Eyes all the Marks of the moſt affectionate and tender Compaſſion, ſhe took one of my Hands, and bathed it with her Tears. *I am very unhappy*, ſaid ſhe, *to cauſe you ſo much Uneaſineſs; but I was deſtined to afflict you: The State I am in, would raiſe a flattering Hope in a Heart leſs generous than yours: my Death will break thoſe Bonds which conſtrain you; that Chain under which you*

have

have ſo long groaned, and the Weight of which you have been ſcarce able to bear. A ſtrong Attachment had prepoſſeſſed your Soul; I have no Right to complain of it; my Gratitude is, and ought to be, the greater: But pardon, my Lord, pardon theſe Tears; it is the firſt Time I have dared to ſhed them before you: I have concealed my poignant Sorrows in my own Breaſt: Your Goodneſs, the tender Pity I ſee this Moment in your Eyes, my approaching Diſſolution, have drawn from me the Confeſſion of a Sentiment which it has not been in your Power to return. So much Reſpect, ſo many Benefits heaped on me, to make amends for that Love which you have refuſed me, whilſt they made me admire ſtill more the Huſband I adored, have, without ceaſing, embittered the Regret of not poſſeſſing the Power to pleaſe him. I wiſh, continued ſhe, *that the Perſon whoſe Idea has ſhut your Heart againſt me, may preſerve for you a Tenderneſs worthy of your Conſtancy.*

ſtancy. I imagined I ought to hide from you my tender Attachment, to ſpare you the Proofs of it; the Dread of being importunate, forced me to ſtifle even the ſtrong Emotions of my Gratitude; ſuffer them to break forth in theſe laſt Moments. You have ſacrificed to the Honour of an unfortunate Creature, a Good which was dear to you: may it be reſtored to you when ſhe is no more! And may my ardent Prayers draw down upon you all the Bleſſings of that Heaven which hears me, which calls me hence, and where I hope ſoon to be employed in watching over the Happineſs of my generous Benefactor; of him who made ſo godlike an Effort, that he might not abandon me to that Shame, from which Death itſelf would not have ſecured me. Love my Daughter; love her, my Lord, and forget the Miſeries her unhappy Mother has brought upon you. Lady *Oſſory* might have ſpoken for ever without Fear of Interruption: Every Word ſhe pronounced, was a

Dagger

Dagger that ſtabbed me to the Heart. I had neglected her; it was now too late to repair, by a Behaviour more tender, that long Indifference of which ſhe had had but too much Senſibility. Ah! Madam! how terrible is it to have done a Wrong! and how ſeverely would the Injured know themſelves revenged, if they could comprehend the bitter Effects of Remorſe in a feeling and virtuous Heart! I ſent to *London* for Doctor *Lewin*, and Doctor *Harriſon*; I called in all, in whoſe Skill it was poſſible ſhe could have the leaſt Confidence. It is not to you, Madam, that I am afraid to confeſs the ardent Deſire I had of ſaving her: But neither her Youth, nor the Aſſiſtance of Art, could recover her from a State already deſperate: She expired in my Arms; and, in ſpite of the Aſſurances they gave me of the Nature of her Diſtemper, a Diſtemper born with her, and which the Delicacy of

her

her Conſtitution could not long have reſiſted, I regarded myſelf with Abhorrence as one of the Cauſes of her Death: I recollected inceſſantly what ſhe had ſaid to me; I could not conſole myſelf for not having had Power enough over my Soul, to diſſemble at leaſt, and conceal from her that another poſſeſſed my Heart. But when one has loſt all Hope of being happy ones ſelf, is it poſſible to be always attentive to the Happineſs of another?

As ſoon as this melancholy Scene was a little effaced from my Memory, I reflected with Tranſport that you were ſtill free: I flattered myſelf a Paſſion once ſo tender, was not entirely extinguiſhed; that you preſerved the Remembrance of it; that my Preſence, and the ſincere Recital of my unhappy Adventure, might yet be able to revive it. The Knowledge of your Character

helped

helped to deceive me: I will confeſs my Crime, ſaid I, ſhe will hear me, ſhe will pity, will forgive me—How cruelly have you deſtroyed the ſweet Illuſion!

As I quitted *London* only to ſpare you the Diſpleaſure of meeting a Woman bearing the Name which you had condeſcended to make Choice of, in determining to change your own, I returned thither three Months after the Death of Lady *Oſſory*. With what Ardour did I approach the Place inhabited by you! What a lively Deſire had I to ſee you, to ſpeak to you, to hear the pleaſing Sound of that lov'd Voice!—I arrived; I ran to ſeek you; as I paſſed by Lady *Bellville's* Door, I obſerved ſome Servants in your Livery; I was told you were there: My Impatience made me overlook the Indiſcretion of the Step I was taking: I went in; I ſaw you; you knew me again!

What

What Anger was on your Countenance, what Diſdain in your Eyes! You ſeized a Pretence for putting an End to your Viſit; you retired; and I remained there, immoveable, pierced with Grief, and ſelf-convicted that I merited thoſe Marks of a Contempt which I found it impoſſible to ſupport. I called in vain at your Door; I wrote to you in vain; my Letters conſtantly refuſed, my Efforts to ſee you rendered fruitleſs by your Precautions: All my Attempts unattended with Succeſs, threw me into a Deſpair of appeaſing your Reſentment. I only obtained the Compaſſion of your Woman, who had very little Influence over you. *Caſtle-Cary* did not dare to intereſt himſelf openly for me, through Fear of diſpleaſing Lady *Henrietta*. At length, you filled up the Meaſure of your Cruelty; you left *London*: and it was not long before I followed you. *Halifax* came

to purchaſe an Eſtate here; I accompanied him; I wrote to you: With what Haughtineſs did you receive this Proof of my Tenderneſs! You anſwered me only to deliver yourſelf from my Importunities; with a Pride, an Inflexibility, to which your Heart is naturally a Stranger, and in which I diſcovered nothing of the gentle, the amiable Soul of Lady *Cateſby*. After leaving me three Days in the moſt painful Suſpence, 'twas to demand your Letters you wrote to me—Your Letters!—Ah! Never aſk them of me—I can never conſent to reſtore them—I fancied you ſoftened: The Goodneſs, which intereſted you for my Life, appeared to me a Return of that tender Inclination, which once attached you to me: I flattered myſelf that Friendſhip at leaſt would plead in my Favour. But I was deceived; you no longer loved me; my Preſence filled you with Horror; it deprived you almoſt

of

of Life: The Sight of a Lover once preferred, once tenderly beloved, ſpread over your Cheeks the Paleneſs of Death. Is it then true that I have loſt all Hope of ſoftening your Heart? Can nothing rekindle that tender Flame?—But you have Reaſon for this Cruelty, Madam; I ought only to complain of myſelf. I ſhould be happy indeed, if I could complain of you—With what Pleaſure ſhould I then have pardoned —Ah! Lady *Cateſby!* If you ever deign to think of a Man whom you believe faithleſs and ungrateful, what Advantages have you over him! You may hate, deſpiſe, him whom you overwhelm with Affliction; whilſt we cannot but eſteem, revere, adore, her who renders him the moſt unhappy of Mankind."

Poor

Poor Lady *Offory!* How her Story touches me! Can I refuſe my Tears to her deplorable Deſtiny? What Strength of Mind! To adore her Huſband, yet conceal her Love from him on the noble Principles of tender Reſpect and Gratitude! Why did he not love her? Why did he not make her happy? She was worthy of his Attachment. Why did he avoid her? Why afflict a Heart ſo full of Senſibility? Had ſhe not a Right to his Tenderneſs? What Cruelty to deprive her of it! I am ſhocked at the Inhumanity of his Behaviour, and cannot approve that unſocial Chagrin, of which he made her the Victim. Unfortunate Miſs *Montford!* She, who baniſhed the Heart of your Huſband, ardently wiſhes to recall you to Life, to ſee you poſſeſſed of a Heart which ought to have been yours: She would not diſturb your Happineſs—Alas! my Dear *Henrietta!* What a Difference? I have

wept,

wept, but Lady *Oſſory* has died—I reproach myſelf for having hated her. I was very unjuſt, very inhuman: It was her Part to have deteſted me. I am ſenſibly affected at her Death. Since he gives me Permiſſion, I will ſend you the Packet. I know not yet what to think—Ah! that amiable Miſs *Montford!* How melancholy has been her Fate! She whom I thought ſo happy!

LETTER XXXVII.

Saturday, WINCHESTER.

LORD *Oſſory* had reaſon to ſay, the Species of his Offence was unknown to me! How could I have imagined?—What a ſtrange Adventure!—That Cloſet—That fatal Darkneſs—His daring Preſumption—

He

He calls it a Misfortune—*I forgot my Love*, ſays he—Yes, theſe Men are extremely inclined to be forgetful: It is however poſſible their Hearts and their Senſes may act independently of each other: they tell us ſo at leaſt, and by theſe pretended Diſtinctions reſerve the Liberty of being excited by Love, ſeduced by Pleaſure, or hurried away by Inſtinct. But obſerve, my Dear, they will not admit us to avail ourſelves of the poor Excuſe they ſo confidently plead in regard to themſelves: Thoſe Emotions, though divided in them, are united in us. This is certainly acknowledging a great Superiority in our Manner of thinking; but, at the ſame Time, reducing us to a terrible Uncertainty, as to the Nature of thoſe Sentiments which lead them to ſeek our Favour: How is it poſſible we can ever diſtinguiſh by which of theſe Impreſſions they are actuated, the Effects being ſo ſimilar, and the Cauſe ſo hidden?

HOWEVER, my Dear *Henrietta*, this perfidious, this ungrateful, this treacherous Lover, has only been inconſtant—Scarce even that—His Head diſordered—His Reaſon diſtracted—Ah! what a Diſtraction! How many Tears has it coſt me! Is it poſſible I can forgive it? But why did Lord *Oſſory* leave me two Years in Ignorance of this fatal Secret? He has given a Reaſon—What has he ſuffered! What Probity, what Generoſity in ſuch a Sacrifice! He ſpeaks of his Daughter: *Amiable little Innocent!* ſays he—I am pleaſed to ſee this Tenderneſs in his Nature—Poor Babe! I believe, my Dear, I ſhall love her too—Ah! If he had told me this at *Hertford*, what Tears would he have ſpared us both! I ſhould have put myſelf in his Place: It would have been infinitely leſs painful to me to have yielded him up, than to ſee myſelf abandoned: I

ſhould have found Conſolation in the Share I ſhould then have had in the Nobleneſs of his Behaviour: I ſhould have lamented him without doubt, but my Sorrows would have loſt much of their Poignancy. I ſhould not have hated, have deſpiſed him: On the contrary, he would have preſerved all my Eſteem. Friendſhip would have joined us in thoſe refined, thoſe tender Bonds, ſo dear to virtuous Hearts. He would not have buried himſelf in the North of *England* to avoid me: We ſhould have continued to ſee each other: I ſhould have loved Lady *Oſſory*: What Right ſhould I then have had to complain? Why might not this amiable Woman have been my Companion, my Friend? She would perhaps have been ſtill living. I ſhould not have had to reproach myſelf with having been the innocent Cauſe of her Afflictions. But to what Purpoſe are all theſe Suppoſitions, with which I tire you? *Lady*

Offory is dead. Her Huſband has been culpable: Is he yet ſo? This is the Point which embarraſes me. The Reaſon of his concealing the Secret is very trifling: So little Confidence in me —— But it was his Wife—I know not what to reſolve.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Sunday, WINCHESTER.

I SHALL leave this Place on *Tueſday* for *Hertford*: *Abraham* is here; his Lord has ſent him to enquire after me: I believe, however, he is leſs anxious about my Health, than my Anſwer. The affecting Death of Lady *Offory* damped the firſt Tranſports of my Joy; the ſoft Impreſſion of Pity is yet ſtrong; but my Heart ſpeaks, and will be heard

heard in its Turn. Is it poſſible even you, my Dear *Henrietta*, can conceive the Happineſs I feel at this Moment? Lord *Oſſory* is not unworthy my Tenderneſs: How ſweet is it to grant to his Merit, what I feared I ſhould have yielded only to my Prepoſſeſſion in his Favour! He has not acted inconſiſtently with thoſe diſtinguiſhed Qualities, which firſt gave him Poſſeſſion of my Soul: the Lover who is ſoon to appear again in my Preſence, is eſtimable, ſincere, generous—Ah! all is pardoned, all is forgot! I will not make him purchaſe by Submiſſion, by Anxiety, by Suſpence, a Favour he ſo earneſtly entreats: an immediate Reconciliation ſhall be the Reward of his Confidence —How happy is it that he has thus opened all his Heart to me! I will write to him inſtantly: Why ſhould I defer a Moment the Pleaſure it is in my Power to give him! The following is a Copy of my Letter.

"*To Lord* OSSORY.

YOU ſuppoſe me changed, my Lord, but I am ſtill the ſame. Senſible to your Confidence, I think I ought to be no leſs ſo to your Friendſhip. I am going to Lord *Oſmond's:* If you come to *Hertford*, I ſhall receive Lord *Oſſory* with that lively Pleaſure which it is natural to feel at the Sight of a Friend, whom one has long imagined loſt for ever."

IN inviting him to *Hertford*, in telling him I ſhall ſee him with Pleaſure, have I not ſaid every thing? It is with Difficulty I conceal the pleaſing Emotions of my Heart: my Joy ſparkles in my Eyes: every body ſays I am grown handſomer within theſe two Days. O, my dear Friend, how I wiſh to ſee you!

BUT I have many Farewels to take; many parting Tears to ſhed. Poor Sir *Harry!* He really deſerves Pity: I have opened my Heart to him; he knows my Attachment: I thought I owed ſomething to the violent Paſſion he has for me: This Confidence, convincing him of my Eſteem, has calmed his Sorrow a little. *He will be my Friend*, he ſays; *the Knowledge of my Happineſs ſhall conſole him*—His Behaviour affects me. Adieu! my Dear *Henrietta!* I expect your Congratulations to meet me at *Hertford:* I ſhall be there on *Thurſday*, perhaps on *Wedneſday:* You may imagine I am very impatient to get thither.

LET-

LETTER XXXIX.

Lord OSSORY *to Lady* HENRIETT

Monday, HERT

YOU write, lovely *Henrietta*, to *Cateſby!* Your Hand, your were known: But to whom were th give your Letter? Is there ſuch a P in the World as Lady *Cateſby?* If th is it not however at *Hertford* you muſ her. If, inſtead of that Friend ſo deſe ly dear to you, your Heart will ad new Object of its Eſteem, Lady *Oſſ* ready to anſwer your tender Congra tions: ſhe has opened your Letter, w Freedom which will perhaps ſurpriſe But what Rights has not this charming

man, this *Juliet?*—She is mine, for ever mine: No longer Lady *Cateſby*, ſhe is my Wife, my Friend, my Miſtreſs; the good Genius who has reſtored to me all thoſe Bleſſings, of which I have been ſo long deprived. Permit me, Madam, to thank you for the generous Warmth, with which you have always interceded with your lovely Friend for my Pardon: She has condeſcended to grant it, and has ſhown, in this Act of Goodneſs, all the Nobleneſs of Sentiment of which you know her capable. Yeſterday was the Day for ever happy—

Lady OSSORY.

THIS impertinent Creature! He will leave me nothing to ſay to you. Oh! my Dear *Henrietta!* They were all united againſt me: I was only invited hither to be drawn into a Snare: My Couſin manag-

ed

ed the Conſpiracy; they did not give me Time to breathe. A repenting Lover at my Feet, Relations ſo dear to me ſoliciting for him, a tender Heart, the Miniſter preſent—Upon my Word they married me ſo haſtily, I do not believe the Marriage is valid. Lady *Oſmond* is ſo urgent—ſo very abſolute—

Lady OSMOND.

I come juſt in Time to vindicate myſelf; a *Snare*, a *Conſpiracy*, *a Marriage which is not valid!* What would you think of me, my dear *Henrietta*, if you were leſs acquainted with my Sentiments in regard to our fair Friend? Yes, my Dear, I have married her to the moſt amiable Nobleman in *England*. The Marriage is valid, I aſſure you: None of the Parties concerned have the leaſt Deſire to break it. *Juliet* has certainly great

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Reaſon

Reaſon to complain of me: Her Happineſs has always been one of my moſt ardent Wiſhes: I believe it now perfect, and I expect your Compliments on this Occaſion.

Lady OSSORY.

You are expected here with Impatience ——No Feaſts, no Balls, without my Dear *Henrietta*; I ſhould have ſaid, no Happineſs, if the Perſon whoſe Eyes follow my Pen was not already a little jealous of my tender Friendſhip.

THE END.

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